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VISIONS AND BELIEFS IN THE WEST OF IRELAND COLLECTED AND ARRANGED BY LADY GREGORY: WITH TWO ESSAYS AND NOTES BY W. B. YEATS

"There's no doubt at all but that there's the same sort of things in other countries; but you hear more about them in these parts because the Irish do be more familiar in talking of them."

SECOND SERIES

G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS
NEW YORK AND LONDON
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1920

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I

HERBS, CHARMS, AND WISE WOMEN

I

HERBS, CHARMS, AND WISE WOMEN

THERE is a saying in Irish, "An old woman without learning, it is she will be doing charms"; and I have told in "Poets and Dreamers" of old Bridget Ruane who came and gave me my first knowledge of the healing power of certain plants, some it seemed having a natural and some a mysterious power. And I said that she had "died last winter, and we may be sure that among the green herbs that cover her grave there are some that are good for every bone in the body and that are very good for a sore heart."

As to the book she told me of that had come from the unseen and was written in Irish, I think of Mrs. Sheridan's answer when I asked in what language the strange unearthly people she had been among had talked: "Irish of course—what else would they talk?" And I remember also that when Blake told Crabb Robinson of the intercourse he had had with Voltaire and was asked in what tongue Voltaire spoke he said, "To my sensations it was English. It was like the touch of a musical key. He touched it probably in French, but to my ear it became English."

I was told by her:

There is a Saint at the Oratory in London, but I don't know his name, and a girl heard of him in London, and he sent her back to Gort, and he said, "There's a woman there that will cure you," and she came to me, and I cured her in two days. And if you could find out the name of that Saint through the Press, he'd tell me his remedies, and all the world would be cured. For I can't do all cures though there are a great many I can do. I cured Pat Carty when the doctor couldn't do it, and a woman in Gort that was paralysed and her two sons that were stretched. For I can bring back the dead with the same herbs our Lord was brought back with—the *slanlus* and the *garblus*. But there are some things I can't do. I can't help any one that has got a stroke from the Queen or the Fool of the Forth.

I know a woman that saw the Queen one time, and she said she looked like any Christian. I never heard of any that saw the Fool but one woman that was walking near Gort, and she called out, "There's the Fool of the Forth coming after me." So her friends that were with her called out though they could see nothing, and I suppose he went away at that for she got no harm.

He was like a big strong man, and half-naked—that's all she said about him.

It was my brother got the knowledge of cures from a book that was thrown down before him on the road. What language was it written in? What language would it be but Irish. Maybe it was God gave it to him, and maybe it was the *other people*. He was a fine strong man, and he weighed twenty-five stone—and he went to England, and then he cured all the world, so that the doctors had no way of living. So one time he got on a ship to go to America, and the doctors had bad men engaged to shipwreck him out of the ship; he wasn't drowned but he was broken to pieces on the rocks, and the book was lost along with him. But he taught me a good deal out of it. So I know all herbs, and I do a good many cures, and I have brought a great many children home, home to the world—and never lost one, or one of the women that bore them. I was never away myself, but I am a cousin of Saggarton, and his uncle was away for twenty-one years.

This is *dwareen* (knapweed) and what you have to do with this is to put it down, with other herbs, and with a bit of threepenny sugar, and to boil it and to drink it for pains in the bones, and don't be afraid but it will cure you. Sure the Lord put it in the world for curing.

And this is *corn-corn* (small aromatic tansy); it's very good for the heart—boiled like the others.

This is *atair-talam* (wild camomile), the father of all herbs—the father of the ground. This is very hard to pull, and when you go for it, you must have a black-handled knife.

And this is *camal-buide* (loosestrife) that will keep all bad things away.

This is *cuineul-Muire* (mullein), the blessed candle of our Lady.

This is *fearaban* (water buttercup) and it's good for every bone of your body.

This is *dub-cosac* (lichen), that's good for the heart, very good for a sore heart. Here are the *slanlus* (plantain) and the *garblus* (dandelion) and these would cure the wide world, and it was these brought our Lord from the Cross, after the ruffians that was with the Jews did all the harm to Him. And not one could be got to pierce His heart till a dark man came and said, "Give me the spear, and I'll do it," and the blood that sprang out touched his eyes and they got their sight.

And it was after that, His Mother and Mary and Joseph gathered their herbs and cured His wounds. These are the best of the herbs, but they are all good, and there isn't one among them but would cure seven diseases. I'm all the days of my life gathering them, and I know them all, but it isn't easy to make them out. Sunday evening is the best time to get them, and I was never interfered with. Seven "Hail Marys" I say when I'm gathering them, and I pray to our Lord and

to St. Joseph and St. Colman. And there may be *some* watching me, but they never meddled with me at all.

Mrs. Quaid:

Monday is a good day for pulling herbs, or Tuesday, not Sunday. A Sunday cure is no cure. The *cosac* (lichen) is good for the heart, there was Mineog in Gort, one time his heart was wore to a silk thread, and it cured him. The *slanugad* (rib-grass) is very good, and it will take away lumps. You must go down when it's growing on the scraws, and pull it with three pulls, and mind would the wind change when you are pulling it or your head will be gone. Warm it on the tongs when you bring it and put it on the lump. The *lus-mor* (mullein) is the only one that's good to bring back children that are away. But what's better than that is to save what's in the craw of a cock you'll kill on St. Martin's Eve and put it by and dry it, and give it to the child that's away.

There's something in green flax I know, for my mother often told me about one night she was spinning flax, before she was married and she was up late. And a man of the faeries came in. She had no right to be sitting up so late, they don't like that. And he told her to go to bed, for he wanted to kill her, and he couldn't touch her while she was handling the flax. And every time he'd tell her to go to bed, she'd give him some answer, and she'd go on pulling a thread of the

flax, or mending a broken one, for she was wise, and she knew that at the crowing of the cock he'd have to go. So at last the cock crowed, and he was gone, and she was safe then, for the cock is blessed.

Mrs. Ward:

As to the *lus-mor*, whatever way the wind is blowing when you begin to cut it, if it changes while you're cutting it, you'll lose your mind. And if you're paid for cutting it, you can do it when you like, but if not *they* mightn't like it. I knew a woman was cutting it one time, and a voice, an enchanted voice, called out, "Don't cut that if you're not paid, or you'll be sorry." But if you put a bit of this with every other herb you drink, you'll live for ever. My grandmother used to put a bit with everything she took, and she lived to be over a hundred.

An Old Man on the Beach:

I wouldn't give into those things, but I'll tell you what happened to a son of my own. He was as fine and as stout a boy as ever you saw, and one day he was out with me, and a letter came and told of the death of some one's child that was in America, and all the island gathered to hear it read. And all the people were pressing to each other there. And when we were coming home, he had a bit of a kippeen in his hand, and getting over a wall he fell, and some way the kippeen went in at his throat, where it had a

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be meddling with them. There was a woman I knew one time wanted a certain herb I knew for a cure for her daughter, and the only place that herb was to be had was down in the bottom of a spring well. She was always asking me would I go and get it for her, but I took advice, and I was advised not to do it. So then she went herself and she got it out, a very green herb it was, not watercress, but it had a bunch of green leaves. And so soon as she brought it into the house, she fell as if dead and there she lay for two hours. And not long after that she died, but she cured the daughter, and it's well I didn't go to gather the herb, or it's on me all the harm would have come.

I used to be gathering an herb one time for the Bishop that lived at Loughmore, dandelion it was. There are two sorts, the white that has no harm in it, that's what I used to be gathering, and the red that has a *pishogue* in it, but I left that alone.

Old Heffernan:

The best herb-doctor I ever knew was Conolly up at Ballyturn. He knew every herb that grew in the earth. It was said that he was away with the faeries one time, and when I knew him he had the two thumbs turned in, and it was said that was the sign they left on him. I had a lump on the thigh one time and my father went to him, and he gave him an herb for it but he told him not to come into the house by the door the wind would be blowing in at.

They thought it was the evil I had, that is given by *them* by a touch, and that is why he said about the wind, for if it was the evil, there would be a worm in it, and if it smelled the herb that was brought in at the door, it might change to another place. I don't know what the herb was, but I would have been dead if I had it on another hour, it burned so much, and I had to get the lump lanced after, for it wasn't the evil I had.

Conolly cured many a one. Jack Hall that fell into a pot of water they were after boiling potatoes in, and had the skin scalded off him and that Doctor Lynch could do nothing for, he cured.

He boiled down herbs with a bit of lard, and after that was rubbed on three times, he was well.

And Pat Cahel that was deaf, he cured with the *rib-mas-seala*, that herb in the potatoes that milk comes out of. His wife was against him doing the cures, she thought that it would fall on herself. And anyway, she died before him. But Connor at Oldtown gave up doing cures, and his stock began to die, and he couldn't keep a pig, and all he had wasted away till he began to do them again; and his son does cures now, but I think it's more with charms than with herbs.

John Phelan:

The *bainne-bo-bliatain* (wood anemone) is good for the headache, if you put the leaves of it on your head. But as for the *lus-mor* it's best not to have anything to do with that.

Mrs. West:

Dandelion is good for the heart, and when Father Prendergast was curate here, he had it rooted up in all the fields about, to drink it, and see what a fine man he is. *Garblus;* how did you hear of that? That is the herb for things that have to do with the faeries. And when you'd drink it for anything of that sort, if it doesn't cure you, it will kill you then and there. There was a fine young man I used to know and he got his death on the head of a pig that came at himself and another man at the gate of Ramore, and that never left them, but was at them all the time till they came to a stream of water. And when he got home, he took to his bed with a headache, and at last he was brought a drink of the *garblus* and no sooner did he drink it than he was dead. I remember him well. Biddy Early didn't use herbs, but let people say what they like, she was a sure woman. There is something in flax, for no priest would anoint you without a bit of tow. And if a woman that was carrying was to put a basket of green flax on her back, the child would go from her, and if a mare that was in foal had a load of flax put on her, the foal would go the same way.

Mrs. Allen:

I don't believe in faeries myself, I really don't. But all the people in Kildare believe in them, and I'll tell you what I saw there one time myself.

There was a man had a splendid big white horse, and he was leading him along the road, and a woman, a next-door neighbour, got up on the wall and looked at him. And the horse fell down on his knees and began to shiver, and you'd think buckets of water were poured over him. And they led him home, but he was fit for nothing, and everyone was sorry for the poor man, and him being worth ninety pounds. And they sent to the Curragh and to every place for vets, but not one could do anything at all. And at last they sent up in to the mountains for a faery doctor, and he went into the stable and shut the door, and whatever he did there no one knows, but when he came out he said that the horse would get up on the ninth day, and be as well as ever. And so he did sure enough, but whether he kept well, I don't know, for the man that owned him sold him the first minute he could. And they say that while the faery doctor was in the stable, the woman came to ask what was he doing, and he called from inside, "Keep her away, keep her away." And a priest had lodgings in the house at the same time, and when the faery doctor saw him coming, "Let me out of this," says he, and away with him as fast as he could. And all this I saw happen, but whether the horse only got a chill or not I don't know.

James Mangan:

My mother learned cures from an Ulster woman, for the Ulster women are the best for

cures; but I don't know the half of them, and what I know I wouldn't like to be talking about or doing, unless it might be for my own family. There's a cure she had for the yellow jaundice; and it's a long way from Ennistymon to Creevagh, but I saw a man come all that way to her, and he fainted when he sat down in the chair, he was so far gone. But she gave him a drink of it, and he came in a second time and she gave it again, and he didn't come a third time for he didn't want it. But I don't mind if I tell you the cure and it is this: take a bit of the dirt of a dog that has been eating bones and meat, and put it on top of an oven till it's as fine as powder and as white as flour, and then pound it up, and put it in a glass of whiskey, in a bottle, and if a man is not too far gone with jaundice, that will cure him.

There was one Carthy at Imlough did great cures with charms and his son can do them yet. He uses no herbs, but he'll go down on his knees and he'll say some words into a bit of unsalted butter, and what words he says, no one knows. There was a big man I know had a sore on his leg and the doctor couldn't cure him, and Doctor Moran said a bit of the bone would have to come out. So at last he went to Jim Carthy and he told him to bring him a bit of unsalted butter the next Monday, or Thursday, or Saturday, for there's a difference in days. And he would have to come three times, or if it was a bad case, he'd have to come nine times.

But I think it was after the third time that he got well, and now he is one of the head men in Persse's Distillery in Galway.

A Slieve Echtge Woman:

The wild parsnip is good for gravel, and for heartbeat there's nothing so good as dandelion. There was a woman I knew used to boil it down, and she'd throw out what was left on the grass. And there was a fleet of turkeys about the house and they used to be picking it up. And at Christmas they killed one of them, and when it was cut open they found a new heart growing in it with the dint of the dandelion.

My father went one time to a woman at Ennis, not Biddy Early, but one of her sort, to ask her about three sheep he had lost.

And she told him the very place they were brought to, a long path through the stones near Kinvara. And there he found the skins, and he heard that the man that brought them away had them sold to a butcher in Loughrea. So he followed him there, and brought the police, and they found him—a poor looking little man, but he had £60 within in his box.

There was another man up near Ballylee could tell these things too. When Jack Fahy lost his wool, he went to him, and next morning there were the fleeces at his door.

Those that are *away* know these things. There was a brother of my own took to it for seven

years—and we at school. And no one could beat him at the hurling and the games. But I wouldn't like to be mixed with that myself.

There was one Moyra Colum was a great one for doing cures. She was called one time to see some sick person, and the man that came for her put her up behind him, on the horse. And some youngsters began to be humbugging him, and humbugging is always bad. And there was a young horse in the field where the youngsters were and it began to gallop, and it fell over a stump and lay on the ground kicking as if in a fit. And then Moyra Colum said, "Let me get down, for I have pity for the horse." And she got down and went into the field, and she picked a blade of a herb and put it to the horse's mouth and in one minute it got up well.

Another time a woman had a sick cow and she sent her little boy to Moyra Colum, and she gave him a bottle, and bade him put a drop of what was in it in the cow's ear. And so he did and in a few minutes he began to feel a great pain in his foot. So when the mother saw that, she took the bottle and threw it out into the street and broke it, and she said, "It's better to lose the cow than to lose my son." And in the morning the cow was dead.

The herbs they cure with, there's some that's natural, and you could pick them at all times of the day; there's a very good cure for the yellow

jaundice I have myself, and I offered it to a woman in Ballygrah the other day, but some people are so taken up with pride and with conceit they won't believe that to cure that sickness you must take what comes from your own nature. She's dead since of it, I hear. But I'll tell you the cure, the way you'll know it. If you are attending a funeral, pick out a few little worms from the earth that's thrown up out of the grave, few or many, twenty or thirty if you like. And when you go home, boil them down in a sup of new milk and let it get cold; and believe me, that will cure the sickness.

There's one woman I knew used to take a bit of tape when you'd go to her, and she'd measure it over her thumb like this; and when she had it measured she'd know what was the matter with you.

For some sicknesses they use herbs that have no natural cure, and those must be gathered in the morning early. Before twelve o'clock? No, but before sunrise. And there's a different charm to be said over each one of them. It is for any sort of pain these are good, such as a pain in the side. There's the *meena madar*, a nice little planteen with a nice little blue flowereen above on it, that's used for a running sore or an evil. And the charm to be said when you're picking it has in it the name of some old curer or magician, and you can

say that into a bit of tow three times, and put it on the person to be cured. That is a good charm. You might use that yourself if it was any one close to you was sick, but for a stranger I'd recommend you not do it. *They* know all things and who are using it, and where's the use of putting yourself in danger?

James Mangan:

My mother learned to do a great many cures from a woman from the North (Note 1) and some I could do myself, but I wouldn't like to be doing them unless for those that are nearest me; I don't want to be putting myself in danger.

For a swelling in the throat it's an herb would be used, or for the evil a poultice you'd make of herbs. But for a pain in the ribs or in the head, it's a charm you should use, and to whisper it into a bit of tow, and to put it on the mouth of whoever would have the pain, and that would take it away. There's a herb called *rif* in your own garden is good for cures. And this is a good charm to say in Irish:

A quiet woman.
A rough man.
The Son of God.
The husk of the flax.

The Old Man on the Beach:

In the old times all could do *druith*—like freemasonry—and the ground was all covered with

the likeness of the devil; and with *druith* they could do anything, and could put the sea between you and the road. There's only a few can do it now, but all that live in the County Down can do it.

Mrs. Quaid:

There was a girl in a house near this was pining away, and a travelling woman came to the house and she told the mother to bring the girl across to the graveyard that's near the house before sunrise and to pick some of the grass that's growing over the remains. And so she did, and the girl got well. But the mother told me that when the woman had told her that, she vanished away, all in a minute, and was seen no more.

I have a charm myself for the headache, I cured many with it. I used to put on a ribbon from the back of the head over the mouth, and another from the top of the head under the chin and then to press my hand on it, and I'd give them great relief and I'd say the charm. But one time I read in the Scriptures that the use of charms is forbidden, so I had it on my conscience, and the next time I went to confession I asked the priest was it any harm for me to use it, and I said it to him in Irish. And in English it means "Charm of St. Peter, Charm of St. Paul, an angel brought it from Rome. The similitude of Christ, suffering death, and all suffering goes with Him and into the flax." And the priest didn't say if I might use it

or not, so I went on with it, for I didn't like to turn away so many suffering people coming to me.

I know a charm a woman from the North gave to Tom Mangan's mother, she used to cure ulcers with it and cancers. It was with unsalted butter it was used, but I don't know what the words were.

John Phelan:

If you cut a hazel rod and bring it with you, and turn it round about now and again, no bad thing can hurt you. And a cure can be made for bad eyes from the ivy that grows on a white-thorn bush. I know a boy had an ulcer on his eye and it was cured by that.

Mrs. Creevy:

There was Leary's son in Gort had bad eyes and no doctor could cure him. And one night his mother had a dream that she got up and took a half-blanket with her, and went away to a blessed well a little outside Gort, and there she saw a woman dressed all in white, and she gave her some of the water, and when she brought it to her son he got well. So the next day she went there and got the water, and after putting it three times on his eyes, he was as well as ever he was.

There was a woman here used to do cures with herbs—a midwife she was. And if a man went for her in a hurry, and on a horse, and he'd want

her to get up behind him, she'd say, "No," that she was never on horseback. But no matter how fast he'd go home, there she'd be close after him.

There was a child was sick and it was known itself wasn't in it. And a woman told the mother to go to a woman she told her of, and not to say anything about the child but to say, "The calf is sick" and to ask for a cure for it. So she did and the woman gave her some herb, and she gave it to the child and it got well.

There was a man from Cuillean was telling me how two women came from the County Down in his father's time, mother and daughter, and they brought two spinning wheels with them, and they used to be in the house spinning. But the milk went from the cow and they watched and saw it was through charms. And then all the people brought turf and made a big fire outside, and stripped the witch and the daughter to burn them. And when they were brought out to be burned the woman said, "Bring me out a bit of flax and I'll show you a pishogue." So they brought out a bit of flax and she made two skeins of it, and twisted it some way like that (interlacing his fingers) and she put the two skeins round herself and the daughter, and began to twist it, and it went up in the air round and round and the two women with it, and the people all saw them

going up, but they couldn't stop them. The man's own father saw that himself.

There was a woman from the County Down was living up on that mountain beyond one time, and there was a boy in the house next to mine that had a pain in his heart, and was crying out with the pain of it. And she came down, and I was in the house myself and I saw her fill the bowl with oatenmeal, and she tied a cloth over it, and put it on the hearth. And when she took it off, all the meal was gone out of one side of the bowl, and she made a cake out of what was left on the other side, and ate it. And the boy got well.

There was a woman in Clifden did many cures and knew everything. And I knew two boys were sent to her one time, and they had a bottle of poteen to bring her, but on the road they drank the poteen. But they got her another bottle before they got to the house, but for all that she knew well, and told them what they had done.

There's some families have a charm in them, and a man of those families can do cures, just like King's blood used to cure the evil, but they couldn't teach it to you or to me or another.

There's a very good charm to stop bleeding; it will stop it in a minute when nothing else can, and there's one to take bones from the neck, and one against ulcers.

Kevin Ralph:

I went to Macklin near Loughrea myself one time, when I had an ulcer here in my neck. But when I got to him and asked for the charm, he answered me in Irish, "The Soggarth said to me, any man that will use charms to do cures with will be damned." I persuaded him to do it after, but I never felt that it did me much good. Because he took no care to do it well after the priest saying that of him. But there's some will only let it be said in an outhouse if there's a cure to be done in the house.

A Woman in County Limerick:

It is twenty year ago I got a pain in my side, that I could not stoop; and I tried Siegel's Syrup and a plaster and a black blister from the doctor, and every sort of thing and they did me no good. And there came in a man one day, a farmer I knew, and he said, "It's a fool you are not to go to a woman living within two miles of you that would cure you—a woman that does charms." So I went to her nine times, three days I should go and three stop away, and she would pass her hand over me, and would make me hold on to the branch of an apple tree up high, that I would hang from it, and she would be swinging me as you would swing a child. And she laid me on the grass and passed her hands over me, and what she said over me I don't know. And at the end of the nine visits I was cured, and the pain left me. At the

time she died I wanted to go lay her out but my husband would not let me go. He said if I was seen going in, the neighbours would say she had left me her cures and would be calling me a witch. She said it was from an old man she got the charm that used to be called a wizard. My father knew him, and said he could bring away the wheat and bring it back again, and that he could turn the four winds of heaven to blow upon your house till they would knock it.

A Munster Midwife:

Is it true a part of the pain can be put on the man? It is to be sure, but it would be the most pity in the world to do it; it is a thing I never did, for the man would never be the better of it, and it would not take any of the pain off the woman. And shouldn't we have pity upon men, that have enough troubles of their own to go through?

Mrs. Hollaran:

Did I know the pain could be put on a man? Sure I seen my own mother that was a midwife do it. He was such a Molly of an old man, and he had no compassion at all on his wife. He was as if making out she had no pain at all. So my mother gave her a drink, and with that he was on the floor and around the floor crying and roaring. "The devil take you," says he, and the pain upon him; but while he had it, it went away from his wife. It did him no harm after, and my mother

would not have done it but for him being so covetous. He wanted to make out that she wasn't sick.

Mrs. Stephens:

At childbirth there are some of the old women are able to put a part of the pain upon the man, or any man. There was a woman in labour near Oran, and there were two policemen out walking that night, and one of them went into the house to light his pipe. There were two or three women in it, and the sick woman stretched beyond them, and one of them offered him a drink of the tea she had been using, and he didn't want it but he took a drink of it, and then he took a coal off the hearth and put it on his pipe to light it and went out to his comrade. And no sooner was he there than he began to roar and to catch hold of his belly and he fell down by the roadside roaring. But the other knew something of what happened, and he took the pipe, and it having a coal on it, and he put it on top of the wall and fired a shot of the gun at it and broke it; and with that the man got well of the pain and stood up again.

No woman that is carrying should go to the house where another woman is in labour; if she does, that woman's pain will come on her along with her own pain when her time comes.

A child to come with the spring tide, it will have luck.

II

ASTRAY, AND TREASURE

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ASTRAY, AND TREASURE

MR. YEATS in his dedication of "The Shadowy Waters" says of some of our woods:

"Dim Pairc-na-tarav where enchanted eyes
Have seen immortal mild proud shadows walk;
Dim Inchy wood that hides badger and fox
And martin-cat, and borders that old wood
Wise Biddy Early called the wicked wood."

I have heard many stories of people led astray in these by invisible power, though I myself, although born at midnight, have lived many hours of many years in their shades and shelters, and as the saying is have "never seen anything worse than myself."

Last May a friend staying with us had gone out early in the afternoon, and had not come back by eight o'clock dinner-time. As half-hours passed we grew anxious and sent out messengers riding and on foot, searching with lanterns here and there in the woods and on Inchy marsh, towards which he had been seen going. It was not till long after the fall of darkness that he returned, tired out with so many

hours of wandering, and with no better explanation than "Yeats talks of the seven woods of Coole, but I say there are seventy times seven." It was in dim Inchy and the wicked wood it borders he had gone astray; and many said that was natural, for they have a bad name, and May is a month of danger. Yet some unbelievers may carry their credulity so far as to believe that the creator of Father Keegan's dreams may himself have dreamed the whole adventure.

I was told by An Army Man who had been through the Indian Mutiny:

It's only yesterday I was talking to a man about *the others*, and he told me that the castle of Ballinamantane is a great place for them, for it's there a great stand was made long ago in one of their last fights. And one night he was making his way home, and only a field between him and his house, when he found himself turned around and brought to another field, and then to another—seven in all. And he remembered the saying that you should turn your coat and that they'd have no power over you, and he did so, but it did him no good. For after that he was taken again, and found himself in the field over beyond. And he had never a one drop taken, but was quite sober that night.

What did they do it for? It might be that he had trespassed on one of their ways; but it's most likely that there was some sort of a rogue among them that turned and did it for sport.

Mrs. Cloonan:

The other evening I was milking the cow over in Inchy, and a beggar-woman came by, with a sack of potatoes and such things on her back. She

makes her living selling ballads in Gort, and then begging afterwards. So she sat down beside me, and she said "I don't like to go on through the wood." So I asked did she ever see anything there. "I did," says she, "three years ago, one night just where the old house is the Dooleys used to live in. There came out of the end of it a woman all in white, and she led me astray all the night, and drove me that I had no time to turn my clothes—and my feet were black with the blows she gave me, and though it was three years ago, I feel the pain in them yet."

Mrs. Coniffe says:

I was in Inchy the other day late, and I met an old beggarman, and I asked him was he ever led astray there. And he said, "Not in this wood, but in the wood beyond, Garryland. It was one night I was passing through it, and met a great lot of them—laughing they were and running about and drinking wine and wanting me to drink with them. And they had cars with them, and an old woman sitting on a sort of an ass-car. And I had a scapular round my neck, and I thought that would make me independent, but it did not, for it was on the highroad outside I found myself put at last.

A Mason:

My father was led astray one time, when he was coming home from a neighbour's house, and he

was led here and there till he didn't know what way he was going. And then the moon began to shine out and he saw his shadow, and another shadow along with it ten feet in length. So with that he ran, and when he got to the wood of Cloon he fell down in a faint.

And I was led astray one night, going across to a neighbour's house—just the length of a field away, and where I could find my way blindfolded. Into the ditch I was led, and to some other field, and I put my hand to the ground, and it was potato ground, and the drills made, but the seed not put in. And if it wasn't at last that I saw a light from Scalp, it's away I'd have been brought altogether.

John Rivers:

Once I was led astray in that field and went round and round and could find no way out—till at last I thought of the old Irish fashion of turning my waistcoat, and did so. And then I got out the gate in one minute.

And one night I was down at the widow Hayley's —I didn't go much there—she used to have the place full of loafers, and they playing cards. But this night I stopped a bit, and then I went out. And the way I was put I could not say, but I found myself in the field with an eight-foot wall behind me—and there I had to stop till some of the men came and found me and brought me out.

A Girl of the Feeneys:

One time my brother when he was coming home late one evening was put asleep in spite of himself, on the grass, at this corner we're passing. None of the boys like to be coming home late, from card-playing or the like, unless there's two or three of them together. And if they go to a wake, they wouldn't for all the world come home before the cock crows. There were many led astray in that hollow beyond, where you see the haycocks. Old Tom Stafford was led astray there by something like a flock of wool that went rolling before him, and he had no power to turn but should follow it. Michael Barrett saw the coach one time driving across Kiltartan bog, and it was seen to many others besides.

As to Michael Barrett, I believe it's mostly in his own head they are. But I know this that when he pulled down the chimney where he said that the piper used to be sitting and playing, he lifted out stones, and he an old man, that I could not have lifted myself when I was young and healthy.

A Clare Woman:

As to treasure, there was a man here dreamt of some buried things—of a skeleton and a crock of money. So he went to dig, but whether he dreamed wrong or that he didn't wait for the third dream, I don't know, but he found the skeleton, skull and all, but when he found the crock there was nothing in it, but very large snail-shells. So he threw them

out in the grass, and next day when he went to look at them they were all gone. Surely there's something that's watching over that treasure under ground.

But it doesn't do to be always looking for money. There was Whaney the miller, he was always wishing to dream of money like other people. And so he did one night, that it was hid under the millstone. So before it was hardly light he went and began to dig and dig, but he never found the money, but he dug till the mill fell down on himself.

So when any one is covetous the old people say, "Take care would you be like Whaney the miller."

Now I'll tell you a story that's all truth. There was a farmer man living there beyond over the mountains, and one day a strange man came in and asked a night's lodging. "Where do you come from?" says the farmer. "From the county Mayo," says he, and he told how he had a dream of a bush in this part of the world, and gave a description of it, and in his dream he saw treasure buried under it. "Then go home, my poor man," said the farmer, "for there's no such place as that about here." So the man went back again to Mayo. But the bush was all the time just at the back of the house, and when the stranger was gone, the farmer began to dig, and there, sure enough, he found the pot of gold, and took it for his own use.

But all the children he had turned silly after

that; there was one of them not long ago going about the town with long hair over his shoulders.

And after that, a poor scholar, such as used to be going about in those times, came to the house, and when he had sat down, the lid of the pot the gold was found in was lying by the fire. And he took it up and rubbed it, and there was writing on it, in Irish, that no one had ever been able to read. And the poor scholar made it out, "This side of the bush is no better than the other side." So he went out to dig, and there he found another pot on the other side just the same as the first pot and he brought it away with him, and what became of him after is unknown.

John Phelan:

There was a man in Gort, Anthony Hynes, he and two others dreamed of finding treasure within the church of Kilmacduagh. But when they got there at night to dig, something kept them back, for there's always something watching over where treasure is buried. I often heard that long ago in the nursery at Coole, at the cross, a man that was digging found a pot of gold. But just as he had the cover took off, he saw old Richard Gregory coming, and he covered it up, and was never able again to find the spot where it was.

But there's dreams and dreams. I heard of a man from Mayo went to Limerick, and walked two or three times across the bridge there. And a cobbler that was sitting on the bridge took notice

of him, and knew by the look of him and by the clothes he wore that he was from Mayo, and asked him what was he looking for. And he said he had a dream that under the bridge of Limerick he'd find treasure. "Well," says the cobbler, "I had a dream myself about finding treasure, but in another sort of a place than this." And he described the place where he dreamed it was, and where was that, but in the Mayo man's own garden. So he went home again, and sure enough, there he found a pot of gold with no end of riches in it. But I never heard that the cobbler found anything under the bridge at Limerick.

I met a woman coming out one day from Cloon, and she told me that when she was a young girl, she went out one day with another girl to pick up sticks near a wood. And she chanced to lay hold on a tuft of grass, and it came up in her hand and the sod with it. And there was a hole underneath full of half-crowns, and she began to fill her apron with them, and as soon as she had the full of her apron she called to the other girl, and the minute she came there wasn't one to be seen. But what she had in her apron she kept.

A Travelling Man:

There was a sister of mine, Bridget her name was, dreamed three nights of treasure that was buried under the bush up there, by the chapel, a mile to the east; you can see the bush there, blown slant-

wise by the wind from the sea. So she got three men to go along with her and they brought shovels to dig for it. But it was the woman should have lifted the first sod and she didn't do it, and they saw, coming down from the mountains of Burren, horses and horses, bearing horse-soldiers on them, and they came around the bush, and the soldiers held up their shovels, and my sister and the men that were with her made away across the field.

The time I was in America, I went out to the country to see Tom Scanlon, my cousin, that is a farmer there and had any amount of land and feeding for the cows, and we went out of the house and sat down on a patch of grass the same as we're sitting on now. And the first word he said to me was, "Did Bridget, your sister, ever tell you of the dream she had, and the way we went digging at the bush, for I was one of the men that was along with her?" "She did often," says I. "Well," says he, "all she told you about it was true."

There were two boys digging for razor fish near Clarenbridge, and one of them saw, as he was digging, a great lot of gold. So he said nothing, the way the other boy would know nothing about it. But when he came back for it it was gone.

There was another boy found gold under a flagstone he lifted. But when he went back next day to get it, all the strength he had wouldn't lift the flag.

The Army Man:

There was a forth sometime or other there inside the gate, and one Kelly told me that he was coming by it one night and saw all the hollow spread with gold, and he had not the sense to take it up, but ran away.

A friend I had near Athenry had more sense. He saw the ground spread with gold and he took up the full of his pockets and paid his rent next day and prospered ever after, as everyone does that gets the faery gold.

Another man I knew of had a dream of a place where there was three crocks of gold. And in the morning he went to dig and found the crocks sure enough, and nothing in them but oyster shells. That was because he went to dig after the first dream. He had a right to wait till he had dreamed of it three times.

A girl the same way dreamt of gold hid in a rock and did not wait for the third dream, but went at once, and all she found was the full of an ass-cart near of sewing needles, and that was a queer thing to find in a rock. No, they don't always hinder you, they help you now and again.

There was a working man used to be digging potatoes for me, and whenever he was in want of money, he found it laid on his window-sill in the

night. But one day he had a drop of drink taken, he told about it, and never a penny more did he find after that.

Sure, there's an old castle beyond Gort, Fiddane it's called, and there you'd see the gold out bleaching, but no one would like to go and take it. And my mother told me one time that a woman went up in the field beyond where the liss is, to milk the cow, and there she saw on the grass a crock full of gold. So she left the bit she had for holding the cow beside it, and she ran back to the house for to tell them all to come out and see it. But when they came the gold was nowhere to be seen, but had vanished away. But in every part of the field there was a bit of rope like the one she left beside the crock, so that she couldn't know what spot it was in at all.

She had a right to have taken it, and told no one. They don't like to have such things told.

Mrs. Coniffe:

That bush you took notice of, the boy told me that it is St. Bridget's bush, and there is a great lot of money buried under it; they know this from an old woman that used to be here a long time ago. Three men went one time to dig for it and they dug and dug all the day and found nothing and they went home and to bed. And in the night whatever it was came to them, they never got the better of it, but died within a

week. And you'd be sorry to see—as the boy did—the three coffins carried out of the three houses. And since then no other person has ever gone to look for the money.

That's no wonder for you to know a faery bush. It grows a different shape from a common one, and looks different someway.

As to hidden gold, I knew a man, Patrick Connell, dreamed he found it beneath a bush. But he wasn't willing to go look for it, and his sons and his friends were always at him to tell where it was, but he would tell them nothing. But at last his sons one day persuaded him to go with them and to dig for it. So they took their car, and they set out. But when they came to a part of the road where there's a small little ditch about a foot wide beside it, he was walking and he put his foot in it and they had to bring him home, for his leg was broke. So there was no more digging for treasure after that.

A Neighbour:

There's crocks of gold in all the forths, but there's cats and things guarding them. And if any one does find the gold, he doesn't live long afterwards. But sometimes you might see it and think that it was only a heap of dung. It's best to leave such things alone.

III

BANSHEES AND WARNINGS

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"*THEN Cuchulain went on his way, and Cathbad that had followed him went with him. And presently they came to a ford, and there they saw a young girl, thin and white-skinned and having yellow hair, washing and ever washing, and wringing out clothing that was stained crimson red, and she crying and keening all the time. 'Little Hound,' said Cathbad, 'Do you see what it is that young girl is doing? It is your red clothes she is washing, and crying as she washes, because she knows you are going to your death against Maeve's great army.'*"—"Cuchulain of Muirthemne."

From Cuchulain's day, or it may be from a yet earlier time, that keening woman of the Sidhe has been heard giving her lamentable warning for those who are about to die. Rachel had not yet been heard mourning for her children when the white-skinned girl whose keening has never ceased in Ireland washed red clothes at the ford. It was she or one of her race who told King Brian he was going to meet his death at Clontarf; though after the defeat of

the old gods that warning had often been sent by a more radiant messenger, as when Columcille at the dawn of the feast of Pentecost "lifted his eyes and saw a great brightness and an angel of God waiting there above him." And Patrick himself had his warning through his angel, Victor, who met him on the road at midday and bade him go back to the barn where he had lodged the night before, for it was there he had to die. Such a messenger may have been at hand at the death of that Irish born mystic, William Blake, when he "burst out into singing of the things he saw in Heaven, and made the rafters ring." And a few years ago the woman of a thatched house at the foot of Echtge told me "There were great wonders done in the old times; and when my father that worked in the garden there above was dying, there came of a sudden three flashes of light into the room, the brightest light that ever was seen in the world; and there was an old man in the room, one Ruane, and I leaned back on him for I had like to faint. And people coming the road saw the light, and up at Mick Inerney's house they all called out that our house was in flames. And when they came and heard of the three flashes of light coming into the room and about the bed they all said it was the angels that were his friends that had come to meet him." When Raftery died, the blind poet who wandered through our townlands a hundred years ago, some say there were flames about the house all through the night, "and those were the angels waking him." Yet his warning had not been sent through these white messengers but through a vision that had

come to him once in Galway, when Death himself had appeared "thin, miserable, sad and sorrowful; the shadow of night upon his face, the tracks of the tears down his cheeks" and had told him he had but seven years to live. And though Raftery spoke back to him in scornful verse, there are some who say he spent those last seven years in praying and in making his songs of religion. To some it is a shadow that brings the warning, or a noise of knocking or a dream. At the hour of a violent death nature itself will show sympathy; I have been told on a gloomy day that it had darkened because there was a man being hanged; and a woman who had travelled told me that once at Bundoran she had "seen the waves roaring and turning" and she knew later it was because at that very time two young girls had been drowned.

I was told by Steve Simon:

I will tell you what I saw the night my wife died. I attended the neighbours up to the road, for they had come to see her, but she said there was no fear of her, and she would not let them stop because she knew that they were up at a wake the night before.

So when I left them I was going back to the house, and I saw the shadow of my wife on the road before me, and it was as white as drifted snow. And when I came into the house, there she was dying.

Mrs. Curran:

My cousin Mary that lives in the village beyond told me that she was coming home yesterday week along the road, and she is a girl would not be afraid to walk the whole world with herself. And it was late, and suddenly there was a man walking beside her, inside the field, on the other side of the wall.

And at first she was frightened, but then she felt sure it was her cousin John that was dying, and then she wasn't afraid, for she knew her cousin would do her no harm. And after a while he was gone, and when she got near home and saw the

lights she was frightened, and when she got into the house she was in a sort of a faint. And next day, this day week, her cousin was dead.

Old Simon:

I heard the Banshee crying not long ago, and within three days a boy of the Murphy's was killed by his own horse and he bringing his cart to Kinvara. And I heard it again a few nights ago, but I heard of no death since then. What is the Banshee? It is of the nature of the Hyneses. Six families it cries for, the Hyneses and the Fahys and I forget what are the others.

I heard her beside the river at Ballylee one time. I would stand barefooted in the snow listening to the tune she had, so nice and so calm and so mournful.

I would yield to dreams because of some things were dreamed to me in my lifetime and that turned out true. I dreamed one time that I saw my daughter that was in America dead, and stretched and a table laid out with the corpse. She came home after, and at the end of five months she wasted and died. And there I saw her stretched as in the dream, and it was on my own table.

One time I was walking the road and I heard a great crying and keening beside me, a woman that was keening, and she conveyed me three miles of the road. And when I got to the door of the house

I looked down and saw a little woman, very broad and broad faced—about the bigness of the seat of that table—and a cloak about her. I called out to her that was my first wife—the Lord be with her—and she lighted a candle and I came in weak and lay upon the floor, and I was till 12 o'clock that night lying in the bed.

A man I was talking to said it was the Banshee, and it cries for three families, the Fahys and the O'Briens and another I forget which. My grandmother was a Fahy, and I suppose, father or mother, it follows the generations. I heard it another time and my daughter from America coming into the house that night. It was the most mournful thing ever you heard, keening about the house for the same term as before, till 12 o'clock of night. And within five months my daughter from America was dead.

John Cloran:

There was a man near us that was ploughing a field, and he found an iron box, and they say there was in it a very old Irish book with all the knowledge of the world in it. Anyway, there's no question you could ask him he couldn't answer. And what he says of the Banshee is, that it's Rachel mourning still for every innocent of the earth that is going to die, like as she did for our Lord when the king had like to kill Him. But it's only for them that's sprung from her own tribe that she'll raise her voice.

Mrs. Smith:

As for the Banshee, where she stops is in the old castle of Esserkelly on the Roxborough estate. Many a one has seen her there and heard her wailing, wailing, and she with a red petticoat put about her head. There was a family of the name of Fox in Moneen, and never one of that family died but she'd be heard keening them.

The Spinning Woman:

The Banshee is all I ever saw myself. It was when I was a slip of a girl picking potatoes along with the other girls, we heard crying, crying, in the graveyard beyond at Ryanrush, so we ran like foals to see who was being buried, and I was the first, and leaped up on the wall. And there she was and gave me a slap on the jaw, and she just like a countrywoman with a red petticoat. Often they hear her crying if any one is going to die in the village.

A Seaside Woman:

One time there was a man in the village was dying and I stood at the door in the evening, and I heard a crying—the grandest cry ever you heard—and I said "Glynn's after dying and they're crying him." And they all came to the door and heard it. But my mother went out after that and found him gasping still.

Sure enough it was the Banshee we heard that evening.

And out there where the turf-boat is lying with its sail down, outside Aughanish, there the Banshee does always be crying, crying, for some that went down there some time.

At Fiddoon that strip of land between Tyrone and Duras something appears and cries for a month before any one dies. A great many are taken away sudden there; and they say that it's because of that thing.

The Banshee cries every time one of the Sionnacs dies. And when the old Captain died, the crows all left the place within two days, and never came back for a year.

A Connemara Woman:

There was a boy from Kylemore I met in America used to be able to tell fortunes. He used to be telling them when the work would be done, and we would be having afternoon tea. He told me one time I would soon be at a burying, and it would be a baby's burying, and I laughed at that. But sure enough, my sister's baby, that was not born at the time, died about a month after, and I went to its burying.

A Herd:

Crying for those that are going to die you'd hear of often enough. And when my own wife was

dying, the night she went I was sitting by the fire, and I heard a noise like the blow of a flail on the door outside. And I went to see what it was, but there was nothing there. But I was not in any way frightened, and wouldn't be if she came back in a vision, but glad to see her I would be.

A Miller:

There was a man that was out in the field and a flock of stares (starlings) came about his head, and it wasn't long after that he died.

There's many say they saw the Banshee, and that if she heard you singing loud she'd be very apt to bring you away with her.

A Connemara Woman:

One night the clock in my room struck six and it had not struck for years, and two nights after—on Christmas night—it struck six again, and afterwards I heard that my sister in America had died just at that hour. So now I have taken the weights off the clock, that I wouldn't hear it again.

Mrs. Huntley:

It was always said that when a Lord —— died, a fox was seen about the house. When the last Lord —— lay dying, his daughter heard a noise outside the house one night, and opened the

hall-door, and then she saw a great number of foxes lying on the steps and barking and running about. And the next morning there was a meet at some distant covert—it had been changed there from hard by where it was to have taken place on account of his illness—and there was not a single fox to be found there or in any other covert. And that day he died.

J. Hanlon:

There was one Costello used to be ringing the bell and pumping water and such things at Roxborough, and one day he was at the fair of Loughrea. And as he started home he sent word to my grandfather "Come to the corner of the old castle and you'll find me dead." So he set out, and when he got to the corner of the castle, there was Costello lying dead before him.

And once going to a neighbour's house to see a little girl, I saw her running along the path before me. But when I got to the house she was in bed sick, and died two days after.

Pat. Linskey:

Well, the time my own wife died I had sent her into *Cloon* to get some things from the market, and I was alone in the house with the dog. And what do you think but he started up and went out to the hill outside the house, and there he stood a while

howling, and it was the very next day my wife died.

Another time I had shut the house door at night and fastened it, and in the morning it was standing wide open. And as I knew by the dates afterwards that was the very night my brother died in India.

Sure I told Stephen Green that, when he buried his mother in England, and his father lying in Kilmacduagh. "You should never separate," says I, "in death a couple that were together in life, for sure as fate, the one'll come to look for the other."

And when there's one of them passing in the air you might get a blast of holy wind you wouldn't be the better of for a long time.

Mrs. Curran:

I was in Galway yesterday, and I was told there that the night before those four poor boys were drowned, there were four women heard crying out on the rocks. Those that saw them say that they were young, and they were out of this world. And one of those boys was out at sea all day, the day before he was drowned. And when he came in to Galway in the evening, some boy said to him "I saw you today standing up on the high bridge." And he was afraid and he told his mother and said "Why did they see me on the high bridge and I out at sea?" And the next day he was drowned. And some say there was not much at all to drown them that day.

A Man near Athenry:

There is often crying heard before a death, and in that field beside us the sound of washing clothes with a beetle is sometimes heard before a death.

I heard crying in that field near the forth one night, and not long after the man it belonged to died.

An Aran Man:

I remember one morning, St. Bridget's Eve, my son-in-law came into the house, where he had been up that little road you see above. And the wife asked him did he see any one, and he said "I saw Shamus Meagher driving cattle." And the wife said, "You couldn't see him, for he's out laying spillets since daybreak with two other men." And he said, "But I did see him, and I could have spoke with him." And the next day—St. Bridget's Day—there was confessions in the little chapel below and I was in it, and Shamus Meagher, and it was he that was kneeling next to me at the Communion. But the next morning he and two other men that had set the spillets went on in their canoe to Kilronan for salt, for they had come short of salt and had a good deal of fish taken. And that day the canoe was upset, and the three of them were drowned.

A Piper:

My father and my mother were in the bed one night and they heard a great lowing and a noise of

the cattle fighting one another, that they thought they were all killed, and they went out and they were quiet then. But they went on to the next house where they heard a lowing, and all the cattle of that house were fighting one another, and so it was at the next. And in the morning a child, one Gannon, was dead—or taken he was.

An Old Man in Aran:

When I was in the State of Maine, I knew a woman from the County Cork, and she had a little girl sick. And one day she went out behind the house and there she saw the fields full of *those*—full of them. And the little girl died.

And when I was in the same State, I was in the house where there was a child sick. And one night I heard a noise outside, as if of hammering. And I went out and I thought it came from another house that was close by that no one lived in, and I went and tried the door but it was shut up.

And I went back and said to the woman, "This is the last night you'll have to watch the child." And at 12 o'clock the next evening it died.

They took my hat from me one time. One morning just at sunrise I was going down to the sea, and a little storm came, and took my hat off and brought it a good way, and then it brought it back and returned it to me again.

An Old Midwife:

I do be dreaming, dreaming. I dreamt one night I was with my daughter and that she was dead and put in the coffin. And I heard after, the time I dreamt about her was the very time she died.

A Woman near Loughrea:

There are houses in Cloon, and Geary's is one of them, where if the people sit up too late the warning comes; it comes as a knocking at the door. Eleven o'clock, that is the hour. It is likely it is some that lived in the house are wanting it for themselves at that time. And there is a house near the Darcys' where as soon as the potatoes are strained from the pot, they must put a plateful ready and leave it for the night, and milk and the fire on the hearth, and there is not a bit left at morning. Some poor souls that come in, looking for warmth and for food.

There is a woman seen often before a death sitting by the river and racking her hair, and she has a beetle with her and she takes it and beetles clothes in the river. And she cries like any good crier; you would be sorry to be listening to her.

Old King:

I heard the Banshee and saw her. I and six others were card playing in the kitchen at the big

house, that is sunk into the ground, and I saw her up outside of the window. She had a white dress and it was as if held over her face. They all looked up and saw it, and they were all afraid and went back but myself. Then I heard a cry that did not seem to come from her but from a good way off, and then it seemed to come from herself. She made no attempt to twist a mournful cry but all she said was, "Oh-oh, Oh-oh," but it was as mournful as the oldest of the old women could make it, that was best at crying the dead.

Old Mr. Sionnac was at Lisdoonvarna at that time, and he came home a few days after and took to the bed and died. It is always the Banshee has followed the Sionnacs and cried them.

Mrs. King:

There was a boy of the Naughtons died not far from this, a fine young man. And I set out to go to the burying, and Mrs. Burke along with me. But when we came to the gate we could hear crying for the dead, and I said "It's as good for us wait where we are, for they have brought the corp out and are crying him." So we waited a while and no one came, and so we went on to the house, and we had two hours to wait before they brought out the corp for the burying, and there had been no crying at all till he was brought out. We knew then who it was crying, for if the boy was a Naughton, it is in a house of the Kearns he died, and the Banshee always cries for the Kearns.

A Doctor:

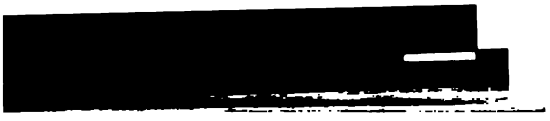
There's a boy I'm attending now, and the first time I went to him, the mother came out of the house with me and said "It's no use to do anything for him, I'm going to lose him." And I asked her why did she say that, and she said "Because the first night he took ill I heard the sound of a chair drawing over to the fire in the kitchen, and it empty, and it was the faeries were coming for him." The boy wouldn't have had much wrong with him, but his brother had died of phthisis, and when he got a cold he made sure he would die too, and he took to the bed. And every day his mother would go in and cry for an hour over him, and then he'd cry and then the father would cry, and he'd say "Oh, how can I leave my father and my mother! Who will there be to mind them when I'm gone?" One time he was getting a little better they sent him over on a message to Scahanagh, and there's a man there called Shanny that makes coffins for the people. And the boy saw Shanny looking at him, and he left his message undone and ran home and cried out "Oh, I'm done for now! Shanny was looking at me to see what size coffin I'd take!" And he cried and they all cried and all the village came in to see what was the matter.

The Old Army man:

As to the invisible world, I hear enough about it, but I have seen but little myself. One night

when I was at Calcutta I heard that one Connor was dead—a man that I had been friendly with—so I went to the house. There was a good many of us there, and when it came to just before midnight, I heard a great silence fall, and I looked from one to another to see the silence. And then there came a knock at the window, just as the clock was striking twelve. And Connor's wife said, "It was just at this hour last night there came a knock like that and immediately afterwards he died." And the strange thing is, it was a barrack-room and on the second story, so that no one could reach it from the street.

In India, before Delhi, there was an officer's servant lodged in the same house as me, and was thrown out of his cot every night. And as sure as midnight came, the dogs couldn't stop outside but would come shrinking and howling into the house. Yes indeed, I believe the faeries are in all countries, all over the world; but the banshee is only in Ireland, though sometimes in India I would think of her when I'd hear the hyenas laughing. Keening, keening, you can hear her, but only for the old Irish families, but she'll follow them even as far as Dublin.



IV

IN THE WAY

IV

IN THE WAY

AN old Athenry man who had been as a soldier all through the Indian Mutiny and had come back to end his days here as a farmer said to me in speaking of "The Others" and those who may be among them: "There's some places of their own we should never touch such as the forths; and if ever we cross their pathways we're like to know it soon enough, for some ill turn they'll do us, and then we must draw back out of their way. . . . And we should above all things leave the house clean at night, with nothing about that would offend them. For we must all die some day, but God knows we're not all fit for heaven just on the minute; and what the intermediate state may be, or what friends we may want there, I don't know. No one has come back to tell us that.

I was told by John Donovan:

Before I came here I was for two years in a house outside Cloon. And no one that lived there ever prospered but all they did went to loss. I sowed seeds and put in the crop each year, and if I'd stopped there I wouldn't have had enough to keep trousers to my back. *In the way* the place must be. I had no disturbance in the house, but some nights I could hear the barrel rolling outside the door, back and forwards, with a sort of a warning to me.

I knew another house in Clare where the front door is always shut up and they only use the back door, but when I asked them the reason they said if they opened the front door a sudden blast would come in, that would take the roof off the house. And there's another house in Clare built in a forth, a new one, shut up and the windows closed, for no one can live in it.

Andrew Lee:

"In the way?" Yes that's a thing that often happens. Sure going into Clough, you might see a house that no man ever yet kept a roof on. Surely it's in the way of their coming and going. And Doctor Nolan's father began to build a barn one

time, and whatever was built in the day, in the night it would be pulled down, so at last they gave over. It was only labour and wages wasted.

Mrs. Cloran:

No, I never heard or felt anything since I came here. The old people used to tell many things, they know more than what the youngsters do. My mother saw many a thing, but they did her no harm. No, I remember none of the stories; since my children died and a weight came on my heart all those things went from me. Yes, it's true Father Boyle banished the dog; and there was a cousin of my own used to live in the house at Garryland, and she could get no sleep for what she used to feel at night. But Father Boyle came and whatever he did, "You'll feel them no more," says he, and she never did, though he was buried before her.

That was a bad, bad place we lived in near the sea. The children never felt anything, but often in the night I could hear music playing and no one else in the house could hear it. But the children died one by one, passing away without pain or ache.

All they saw was twice; the two last little girls I had were beside the door at night talking and laughing and they saw a big dark man pass by, but he never spoke. Some old thing out of the walls he must have been. And soon after that they died.

One time when I was there a strange woman came in, and she knew everything and told me everything. "I'd give you money if I had it," said I. "I know well you haven't much of it," says she; "but take my word and go away out of this house to some other place, for you're *in the way*." She told me to tell no one she came, and that shows there was something not right about her; and I never saw her any more.

But if I'd listened to her then, and if I knew then what she meant by the house being *in the way* I wouldn't have stopped in it, and my seven fine children would be with me now. Took away they were by *them* and without ache or pain. I never had a sign or a vision from them since, but often and often they come across me in my sleep.

Her Husband:

The woman that came to give my wife the warning, I didn't see her, and she knew all that was in the house and all about me and what money I had, and that I would grow very poor. And she said that before I'd die, I'd go to the strand and come back again. And we couldn't know what she meant, and we thought it must mean that I'd go to America. But we knew it at last. For one day I was washing sheep down at Cahirglissane, and there is said to be the deepest water in the world in one part of that lake. And as I was standing by it, a sheep made a run and went between my two legs, and threw me into the

water, and I not able to swim. And I was brought on the top of the water safe and sound to land again; and I knew well who it was helped me, and saved my life. She that had come before to give advice that would save my children, it's she that was my friend over there. To say a Mass in the house? No use at all that would have been, living in the place we did.

But they're mostly good neighbours. There was a woman they used to help, one of them used to come and help her to clean the house, but she never came when the husband was there. And one day she came and said they were going to move now, to near Clifden. And she bid the woman follow them, and whenever she'd come to a briar turned down, with a thorn stuck in the earth, to build a house there.

A Travelling Man:

I was sleeping at a house one time and *they* came in—the fallen angels. They were pulling the clothes off me, ten times they did that, and they were laughing like geese—just the very sound of geese—and their boots were too large for their feet and were clapping, clapping on the floor. I suppose they didn't like me to be in it, or that the house was built in one of their passages.

My father was driven out of the little garden house at Castleboy one time he went to sleep in it. In the way, I suppose it must have been.

And I knew of a herd's house, where five or six herds went one after another and every one of them died, and their dogs and their cow. And the gentleman that owned the place came to ask another one to go in it, and his wife said she wouldn't go, for there was some bad luck about it. But she went after, and she was a very clean woman, not like some of them that do have the house dirty. Well, one day a woman came to the door and asked for a dish of oaten meal, and she took it from the shelf, and gave it to her. "I'll bring it back to you tomorrow," says she, "it'll be easy getting it then when it's market day." "Do not," says the woman of the house, "for if you do I won't take it." "Well," says the stranger, "you'll have luck after this; only one thing I tell you, keep that door at the back shut, and if you want any opening there, let you open the window." Well, so she did, and by minding that rule, and keeping the house so clean, she was never troubled but lived there all her life.

An Island Woman:

There are some houses that never bring luck. There is one over there, out of this village, and two or three died in it, and one night it blazed up and burned down, those that were out in the fishing boats could see it, but it was never known how it happened.

There was a house over in the other village and a woman living in it that had two forths of land.

And she had clever children, but the most of them died one after another, boys and girls, and then the husband died. And after that one of the boys that had died came to her and said "You'd best leave this house or you'll be as we are, and we are all now living in the Black Rock at the gable end of the house. And two of the McDaraghs are with us there."

So after that she left the house—you can cut grass now in the place where it was, and it's green all through the summer and the winter—and she went up to the north side and she married a young man up there, for she was counted a rich woman. She had but two daughters left, and one of them was married, and there was a match to be made for the other, but the stepfather wouldn't allow her to give any of the land to her, so she said she'd go to America, and the priest drew up a stamped paper for her, that they'd keep a portion of money for her every year till she'd come back. It wasn't long after that the stepfather was out in one of the fields one day and two men came and knocked him down and gave him a beating. And it was his belief it was the father of the girl and one of the brothers that came to beat him.

And one of the neighbours that went to the house one night saw one of the brothers standing at the window, plump and plain. And a first cousin of theirs—a Donovan—was near the Black Rock one night, and he saw them playing ball there, the whole of them that had gone, and others

with them. And when they saw him they whistled to make fun of him, and he went away.

The stepfather died after that, and the woman herself died, and was buried a week yesterday. And she had one son by the second husband and he was always silly-like, and the night she died he went into the room where she was, to the other side of the bed, and he called out, and then he came out walking crooked, and his face drawn up on one side; and so he is since, and a neighbour taking care of him. And you'd hardly mind what a poor silly creature like him would say, but what he says is that it was some of the boys that were gone that were in it. And now there's no one to take up the land that so many were after; the girl in America wouldn't for all the world come back to that place.

V

THE FIGHTING OF THE FRIENDS

V

THE FIGHTING OF THE FRIENDS

"*ONE time on Hy, one Brito of Columcille's brotherhood was dying, and Columcille gave him his blessing but would not see him die, and went out into the little court of the house. And he had hardly gone out when the life went from Brito. And Columcille was out in the little court, and one of the monks saw him looking upward, and wonder on him, and he asked what was it he saw. And Columcille said, 'I have seen just at this moment the holy angels fighting in the air against the power of the enemy, and I gave thanks to Christ, the Judge, because the winning angels have carried to heaven the soul of this stranger that is the first to have died among us in this island. And do not tell his secret to any person in my lifetime,' he said.*"—"Saints and Wonders."

"*With that King Arthur entereth into a great forest adventurous, and rideth the day long until he cometh about evensong into the thick of the forest. And he espied a little house beside a little chapel, and it well seemed to him to be a hermitage. . . . And it seemed to him that there was a strife in the chapel.*

The ones were warping so tunably and sweetly as it were angels, and the others spake so harshly as it were fiends. . . . The voices ceased as soon as he was within. He marvelleth how it came that this house and hermitage were solitary, and what had become of the hermit that dwelt therein. He drew nigh the altar of the chapel, and beheld in front thereof a coffin all discovered, and he saw the hermit lying therein all clad in his vestments, and his hands crossed upon his breast, and he had life in him yet, but he was nigh his end, being at the point of death. . . . The King departed and so returned back into the little house, and sate him down on a seat whereon the hermit wont to sit. And he heareth the strife and the noise begin again within the chapel, and the ones he heareth speaking high and the others low, and he knoweth well by the voices that the ones are angels and the others devils. And he heareth that the devils are distraining on the hermit's soul, and that judgment will presently be given in their favour, whereof make they great joy. King Arthur is grieved in his heart when he heareth that the angels' voices are stilled. And while he sitteth thus, stooping his head toward the ground, full of vexation and discontent, he heareth in the chapel the voice of a Lady that spake so sweet and clear that no man in this earthly world, were his grief and heaviness never so sore, but and he had heard the sweet voice of her pleading would again have been in joy. . . . The devils go their way all discomfit and aggrieved; and the sweet Mother of our Lord God taketh the soul of the hermit. . . . And

the angels take it and begin to sing for joy 'Te Deum Laudamus.' And the Holy Lady leadeth them and goeth her way along with them."—"The High History of the Holy Grail." Translated by Sebastian Evans.

Before I had read this old story from "The High History of the Holy Grail" I had heard on our own roads of the fighting at the hour of death, and how the friends of the dying among the dead come and use their strength on his side, and I had been shown here and there a house where such a fight had taken place. In the old days it was a king or saint who saw and heard this unearthly battle; but now it is not those who live in palaces who are aware of it, and it is not around the roof of a fair chapel the hosts of good and evil gather in combat for the parting soul, but around the thatched and broken roof of the poor.

I was told by An Islander:

There are more of the Sheogue in America than what there are here, and more of other sort of spirits. There was a man from there told me that one night in America he had brought his wife's niece that was sick back from the hospital, and had put her in an upper room. And in the evening they heard a scream from her and she called out "The room is full of them, and my father is with them, and my aunt." And he drove them away and used the devil's name and cursed them. And she was left quiet that night, but the next day she said "I'll be destroyed altogether tonight with them." And he said he'd keep them out, and he locked the door of the house. And towards midnight he heard them coming to the door and trying to get in, but he kept it locked and he called to them by way of the keyhole to keep away out of that. And there was talking among them, and the girl that was upstairs said that she could hear the laugh of her father and of her aunt. And they heard the greatest fighting among them that ever was, and after that they went away, and the girl got well. That's what often happens, crying and fighting for one that's sick or going to die.

Mrs. Meagher:

There was an old woman the other day was telling me of a little girl that was put to bake a cake, for her mother was sick in the room. And when she turned away her head for a minute the cake was gone. And that happened the second day and the third, and the mother was vexed when she heard it, thinking some of the neighbours had come and taken it away.

But the next day an old man appeared, and she knew he was the grandfather, and he said "It's by me the cake was taken, for I was watching the house these three nights when I knew there was some one sick in it. And you never heard such a fight as there was for her last night, and they would have brought her away but for me that had my shoulder to the door." And the woman began to recover from that time.

Tom Smith:

There does often be fighting when a person is dying. John Madden's wife that lived in this house before I came to it, the night she died there was a noise heard, that all the village thought that every wall of every garden round about was falling down. But in the morning there was no sign of any of them being fallen.

And Hannay that lived at Cahir, the bonesetter, when I went to him one time told me that one night late he was walking the road near Ardrahan. And they heard a great noise of fighting in the

castle he was passing by, and no one living in it and it open to the sky. And he turned in and was going up the stairs, and a lady in a white dress stopped him and wouldn't let him pass up. But the next day he went to look and he found the floor all covered with blood.

And before John Casey's death, John Leeson asked me one day were we fighting down at our place, for he heard a great noise of fighting the night before.

A Farmer:

As to fighting for those that are dying, I'd believe in that. There was a girl died not far from here, and the night of her death there was heard in the air the sound of an army marching, and the drums beating, and it stopped over the house where she was lying sick. And they could see no one, but could hear the drums and the marching plain enough, and there were like little flames of lightning playing about it.

Did they fight for Johnny Casey? No, believe me it's not among the faeries Johnny Casey is. Too old he is for them to want him among them, and too cranky.

I would hardly believe they'd take the old, but we can't know what they might want of them. And it's well to have a friend among them, and

it's always said you have no right to fret if your children die, for it's well to have them there before you. And when a person is dying the friends and the others will often come about the house and will give a great challenge for him. They don't want cross people, and they won't take you if you say so much as one cross word. It's only the good and the pious they want. Now isn't that very good of them?

Another:

There was a young man I knew died, a fine young man, twenty-five years of age. He was seven or eight days ill, and the night he died they could hear fighting around the house, and they heard voices but they couldn't know what they were saying. And in the morning the ground was all covered with blood.

When Connors the young policeman died, sure the mother said she never heard such fighting as went on within the house. And there was blood splashed high up on the walls. They never let on how he got the touch, but I suppose they knew it themselves.

A Gatekeeper:

There was a girl near Westport was *away*, and the way it came on her was, she was on the road one day and two men passed her, and one of them said, "That's a fine girl," and the other said, "She

belongs to my town," and there and then she got a pain in her knee, and couldn't walk home but had to be brought in a car. And she used to be away at night, and thorns in her feet in the morning, but she never said where she went. But one time the sister brought her to Kilfenora, and when they were crossing a bog near to there, she pointed out a house in the bog, and she said "It's there I was last night." And the sister asked did she know any one she saw in it, and she said "There was one I know, that is my mother's cousin," and she told her name. And she said "But for her they'd have me ill-treated, but she fought for me and saved me." She was thought to be dying one time and given over, and my mother sent me to see her, and how was she. And she was lying on the bed and her eyes turned back, and she speechless, and I told my mother when I came home she hadn't an hour to live. And the next day she was up and about and not a thing on her. It might be the mother's cousin that fought for her again there. She went to America after.

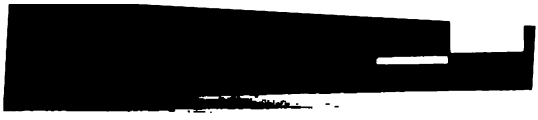
An Aran Woman:

There's often fighting heard about the house where one is sick, that is what we call "the fighting of the friends" for we believe it is the friends and the enemies of the sick person fighting for him.

I knew a house where there were a good many sleeping one night, and in the morning there was

blood on the threshold, and the clothes of those that slept on the floor had blood on them. And it wasn't long after that the woman of the house took sick and died.

One night there was one of the boys very sick within, and in the morning the grandmother said she heard a great noise of fighting in the night about the door. And she said: "If it hadn't been for Michael and John being drowned, you'd have lost Martin last night. For they were there fighting for him; I heard them, and I saw the shadow of Michael, but when I turned to take hold of him he was gone."



VI

THE UNQUIET DEAD

VI

THE UNQUIET DEAD

A GOOD many years ago when I was but beginning my study of the folk-lore of belief, I wrote somewhere that if by an impossible miracle every trace and memory of Christianity could be swept out of the world, it would not shake or destroy at all the belief of the people of Ireland in the invisible world, the cloud of witnesses, in immortality and the life to come. For them the veil between things seen and unseen has hardly thickened since those early days of the world when the sons of God mated with the daughters of men; when angels spoke with Abraham in Hebron or with Columcille in the oakwoods of Derry, or when as an old man at my own gate told me they came and visited the Fianna, the old heroes of Ireland, "because they were so nice and so respectable." Ireland has through the centuries kept continuity of vision, the vision it is likely all nations possessed in the early days of faith. Here in Connacht there is no doubt as to the continuance of life after death. The spirit wanders for a while in that intermediate region to which mystics and theologians have given various names, and should it return and

become visible those who loved it will not be afraid, but will, as I have already told, put a light in the window to guide the mother home to her child, or go out into the barley gardens in the hope of meeting a son. And if the message brought seems hardly worth the hearing, we may call to mind what Frederic Myers wrote of more instructed ghosts:

"If it was absurd to listen to Kepler because he bade the planets move in no perfect circles but in undignified ellipses, because he hastened and slackened from hour to hour what ought to be a heavenly body's ideal and unwavering speed; is it not absurder still to refuse to listen to these voices from afar, because they come stammering and wandering as in a dream confusedly instead of with a trumpet's call? Because spirits that bending to earth may undergo perhaps an earthly bewilderment and suffer unknown limitations, and half remember and half forget?"

And should they give the message more clearly who knows if it would be welcome? For the old Scotch story goes that when S. Columcille's brother Dobhran rose up from his grave and said, "Hell is not so bad as people say," the Saint cried out, "Clay, clay on Dobhran!" before he could tell any more.

I was told by Mrs. Dennehy:

Those that mind the teaching of the clergy say the dead go to Limbo first and then to Purgatory and then to hell or to heaven. Hell is always burning and if you go there you never get out; but those that mind the old people don't believe, and I don't believe, that there is any hell. I don't believe God Almighty would make Christians to put them into hell afterwards.

It is what the old people say, that after death the shadow goes wandering, and the soul is weak, and the body is taking a rest. The shadow wanders for a while and it pays the debts it had to pay, and when it is free it puts out wings and flies to Heaven.

An Aran Man:

There was an old man died, and after three days he appeared in the cradle as a baby; they knew him by an old look in his face, and his face being long and other things. An old woman that came into the house saw him, and she said, "He won't be with you long, he had three deaths to die, and this is the second," and sure enough he died at the end of six years.

Mrs. Martin:

There was a man beyond when I lived at Ballybron, and it was said of him that he was taken away—up before God Almighty. But the blessed Mother asked for grace for him for a year and a day. So he got it. I seen him myself, and many seen him, and at the end of the year and a day he died. And that man ought to be happy now anyway. When my own poor little girl was drowned in the well, I never could sleep but fretting, fretting, fretting. But one day when one of my little boys was taking his turn to serve the Mass he stopped on his knees without getting up. And Father Boyle asked him what did he see and he looking up. And he told him that he could see his little sister in the presence of God, and she shining like the sun. Sure enough that was a vision He had sent to comfort us. So from that day I never cried nor fretted any more.

A Herd:

Do you believe Roland Joyce was seen? Well, he was. A man I know told me he saw him the night of his death, in Esserkelly where he had a farm, and a man along with him going through the stock. And all of a sudden a train came into the field, and brought them both away like a blast of wind.

And as for old Parsons Persse of Castleboy, there's thousands of people has seen him hunting

at night with his horses and his hounds and his bugle blowing. There's no mistake at all about him being there.

An Aran Woman:

There was a girl in the middle island had died, and when she was being washed, and a priest in the house, there flew by the window the whitest bird that ever was seen. And the priest said to the father: "Do not lament, unless what you like, your child's happy for ever!"

Mrs. Casey:

Near the strand there were two little girls went out to gather cow-dung. And they sat down beside a bush to rest themselves, and there they heard a groan coming from under the ground. So they ran home as fast as they could. And they were told when they went again to bring a man with them.

So the next time they went they brought a man with them, and they hadn't been sitting there long when they heard the saddest groan that ever you heard. So the man bent down and asked what was it. And a voice from below said, "Let some one shave me and get me out of this, for I was never shaved after dying." So the man went away, and the next day he brought soap and all that was needful and there he found a body lying laid out on the grass. So he shaved it, and with that wings came and carried it up to high heaven.

A Chimney-sweep:

I don't believe in all I hear, or I'd believe in ghosts and faeries, with all the old people telling you stories about them and the priests believing in them too. Surely the priests believe in ghosts, and tell you that they are souls that died in trouble. But I have been about the country night and day, and I remember when I used to have to put my hand out at the top of every chimney in Coole House; and I seen or felt nothing to frighten me, except one night two rats caught in a trap at Roxborough; and the old butler came down and beat me with a belt for the scream I gave at that. But if I believed in any one coming back, it would be in what you often hear, of a mother coming back to care for her child.

And there's many would tell you that every time you see a tree shaking there's a ghost in it.

Old Lambert of Dangan was a terror for telling stories; he told me long ago how he was near the Piper's gap on Ballybrit race-course, and he saw one riding to meet him, and it was old Michael Lynch of Ballybrista, that was dead long before, and he never would go on the race-course again. And he had heard the car with headless horses driving through Loughrea. From every part they are said to drive, and the place they are all going to is Benmore, near Loughrea, where there is a ruined dwelling-house and an old forth. And at Mount Mahon a herd told me the other day he often

saw old Andrew Mahon riding about at night. But if I was a herd and saw that I'd hold my tongue about it.

Mrs. Casey:

At the graveyard of Drumacoo often spirits do be seen. Old George Fitzgerald is seen by many. And when they go up to the stone he's sitting on, he'll be sitting somewhere else.

There was a man walking in the wood near there, and he met a woman, a stranger, and he said "Is there anything I can do for you?" For he thought she was some country-woman gone astray. "There is," says she. "Then come home with me," says he, "and tell me about it." "I can't do that," says she, "but what you can do is this, go tell my friends I'm in great trouble, for twenty times in my life I missed going to church, and they must say twenty Masses for me now to deliver me, but they seem to have forgotten me. And another thing is," says she, "there's some small debts I left and they're not paid, and those are helping to keep me in trouble." Well, the man went on and he didn't know what in the world to do, for he couldn't know who she was, for they are not permitted to tell their name. But going about visiting at country houses he used to tell the story, and at last it came out she was one of the Shannons. For at a house he was telling it at they remembered that an old woman they had, died a year ago, and that she used to be running up little debts unknown

to them. So they made inquiry at Findlater's and at another shop that's done away with now, and they found that sure enough she had left some small debts, not more than ten shillings in each, and when she died no more had been said about it. So they paid these and said the Masses, and shortly after she appeared to the man again. "God bless you now," she said, "for what you did for me, for now I'm at peace."

A Tinker's Daughter:

I heard of what happened to a family in the town. One night a thing that looked like a goose came in. And when they said nothing to it, it went away up the stairs with a noise like lead. Surely if they had questioned it, they'd have found it to be some soul in trouble.

And there was another soul came back that was in trouble because of a ha'porth of salt it owed.

And there was a priest was in trouble and appeared after death, and they had to say Masses for him, because he had done some sort of a crime on a widow.

Mrs. Farley:

One time myself I was at Killinan, at a house of the Clancys' where the father and mother had died, but it was well known they often come to look after the children. I was walking with another girl through the fields there one evening and I looked up and saw a tall woman dressed all

in black, with a mantle of some sort, a wide one, over her head, and the waves of the wind were blowing it off her, so that I could hear the noise of it. All her clothes were black, and had the appearance of being new. And I asked the other girl did she see her, and she said she did not. For two that are together can never see such things, but only one of them. So when I heard she saw nothing I ran as if for my life, and the woman seemed to be coming after me, till I crossed a running stream and she had no power to cross that. And one time my brother was stopping in the same house, and one night about twelve o'clock there came a smell in the house like as if all the dead people were there. And one of the girls whose father and mother had died got up out of her bed, and began to put her clothes on, and they had to lock the doors to stop her from going away out of the house.

There was a woman I knew of that after her death was kept for seven years in a tree in Kinadyfe, and for seven years after that she was kept under the arch of the little bridge beyond Kilchriest, with the water running under her. And whether there was frost or snow she had no shelter from it, not so much as the size of a leaf.

At the end of the second seven years she came to her husband, and he passing the bridge on the way home from Loughrea, and when he felt her near him he was afraid, and he didn't stop to question her, but hurried on.

So then she came in the evening to the house of her own little girl. But she was afraid when she saw her, and fell down in a faint. And the woman's sister's child was in the house, and when the little girl told her what she saw, she said "You must surely question her when she comes again." So she came again that night, but the little girl was afraid again when she saw her and said nothing. But the third night when she came the sister's child, seeing her own little girl was afraid, said "God bless you, God bless you." And with that the woman spoke and said "God bless you for saying that." And then she told her all that had happened her and where she had been all the fourteen years. And she took out of her dress a black silk handkerchief and said: "I took that from my husband's neck the day I met him on the road from Loughrea, and this very night I would have killed him, because he hurried away and would not stop to help me, but now that you have helped me I'll not harm him. But bring with you to Kilmacduagh, to the graveyard, three cross sticks with wool on them, and three glasses full of salt, and have three Masses said for me; and I'll appear to you when I am at rest." And so she did; and it was for no great thing she had done that trouble had been put upon her.

John Cloran:

That house with no roof was made a hospital of in the famine, and many died there. And one

night my father was passing by and he saw some one standing all in white, and two men beside him, and he thought he knew one of the men and spoke to him and said "Is that you, Martin?" but he never spoke nor moved. And as to the thing in white, he could not say was it man or woman, but my father never went by that place again at night.

The last person buried in a graveyard has the care of all the other souls until another is to be buried, and then the soul can go and shift for itself. It may be a week or a month or a year, but watch the place it must till another soul comes.

There was a man used to be giving short measure, not giving the full yard, and one time after his death there was a man passing the river and the horse he had would not go into it. And he heard the voice of the tailor saying from the river he had a message to send to his wife, and to tell her not to be giving short measure, or she would be sent to the same place as himself. There was a hymn made about that.

There was a woman lived in Rathkane, alone in the house, and she told me that one night something came and lay over the bed and gave three great moans. That was all ever she heard in the house.

The shadows of the dead gather round at Samhain time to see is there any one among their friends saying a few Masses for them.

An Islander:

Down there near the point, on the 6th of March, 1883, there was a curragh upset and five boys were drowned. And a man from County Clare told me that he was on the coast that day, and that he saw them walking towards him on the Atlantic.

There is a house down there near the sea, and one day the woman of it was sitting by the fire, and a little girl came in at the door, and a red cloak about her, and she sat down by the fire. And the woman asked her where did she come from, and she said that she had just come from Connemara. And then she went out, and when she was going out the door she made herself known to her sister that was standing in it, and she called out to the mother. And when the mother knew it was the child she had lost near a year before, she ran out to call her, for she wouldn't for all the world to have not known her when she was there. But she was gone and she never came again.

There was this boy's father took a second wife, and he was walking home one evening, and his wife behind him, and there was a great wind blowing, and he kept his head stooped down because of the seaweed coming blowing into his eyes. And she was about twenty paces behind, and she saw his first wife come and walk close beside him, and he never saw her, having his head down, but she kept with him near all the way. And when

they got home, she told the husband who was with him, and with the fright she got she was bad in her bed for two or three days—do you remember that, Martin? She died after, and he has a third wife taken now.

I believe all that die are brought among them, except maybe an odd old person.

A Kildare Woman:

There was a woman I knew sent into the Rotunda Hospital for an operation. And when she was going she cried when she was saying good-bye to her cousin that was a friend of mine, for she felt in her that she would not come back again. And she put her two arms about her going away and said, "If the dead can do any good thing for the living, I'll do it for you." And she never recovered, but died in the hospital. And within a few weeks something came on her cousin, my friend, and they said it was her side that was paralysed, and she died. And many said it was no common illness, but that it was the dead woman that had kept to her word.

A Connemara Man:

There was a boy in New York was killed by rowdies, they killed him standing against a lamp-post and he was frozen to it, and stood there till morning. And it is often since that time he was seen in the room and the passages of the house where he used to be living.

And in the house beyond a woman died, and some other family came to live in it; but every night she came back and stripped the clothes off them, so at last they went away.

When some one goes that owes money, the weight of the soul is more than the weight of the body, and it can't get away and keeps wandering till some one has courage to question it.

Mrs. Casey:

My grandmother told my mother that in her time at Cloughballymore, there was a woman used to appear in the churchyard of Rathkeale, and that many boys and girls and children died with the fright they got when they saw her.

So there was a gentleman living near was very sorry for all the children dying, and he went to an old woman to ask her was there any way to do away with the spirit that appeared. So she said if any one would have courage to go and to question it, he could do away with it. So the gentleman went at midnight and waited at the churchyard, and he on his horse, and had a sword with him. So presently the shape appeared and he called to it and said, "Tell me what you are?" And it came over to him, and when he saw the face he got such a fright that he turned the horse's head and galloped away as hard as he could. But after galloping a long time he looked down and what did he see beside him but the woman running and

her hand on the horse. So he took his sword and gave a slash at her, and cut through her arm, so that she gave a groan and vanished, and he went on home.

And when he got to the stable and had the lantern lighted, you may think what a start he got when he saw the hand still holding on to the horse, and no power could lift it off. So he went into the house and said his prayers to Almighty God to take it off. And all night long, he could hear moaning and crying about the house. And in the morning when he went out the hand was gone, but all the stable was splashed with blood. But the woman was never seen in those parts again.

A Seaside Man:

And many see the faeries at Knock and there was a carpenter died, and he could be heard all night in his shed making coffins and carts and all sorts of things, and the people are afraid to go near it. There were four boys from Knock drowned five years ago, and often now they are seen walking on the strand and in the fields and about the village.

There was a man used to go out fowling, and one day his sister said to him, "Whatever you do don't go out tonight and don't shoot any wild-duck or any birds you see flying—for tonight they are all poor souls travelling."

An Old Man in Galway Workhouse:

Burke of Carpark's son died, but he used often to be seen going about afterwards. And one time a herd of his father's met with him and he said, "Come tonight and help us against the hurlers from the north, for they have us beat twice, and if they beat us a third time, it will be a bad year for Ireland."

It was in the daytime they had the hurling match through the streets of Galway. No one could see them, and no one could go outside the door while it lasted, for there went such a whirlwind through the town that you could not look through the window.

And he sent a message to his father that he would find some paper he was looking for a few days before, behind a certain desk, between it and the wall, and the father found it there. He would not have believed it was his son the herd met only for that.

A Munster Woman:

I have only seen them myself like dark shadows, but there's many can see them as they are. Surely they bring away the dead among them.

There was a woman in County Limerick that died after her baby being born. And all the people were in the house when the funeral was to be, crying for her. And the cars and the horses were out on the road. And there was seen among them a carriage full of ladies, and with them the woman

was sitting that they were crying for, and the baby with her, and it dressed.

And there was another woman I knew of died, and left a family, and often after, the people saw her in their dreams, and always in rich clothes, though all the clothes she had were given away after she died, for the good of her soul, except maybe her shawl. And her husband married a serving girl after that, and she was hard to the children, and one night the woman came back to her, and had like to throw her out of the window in her nightdress, till she gave a promise to treat the children well, and she was afraid not to treat them well after that.

There was a farmer died and he had done some man out of a saddle, and he came back after to a friend, and gave him no rest till he gave a new saddle to the man he had cheated.

Mrs. Casey:

There was a woman my brother told me about and she had a daughter that was red-haired. And the girl got married when she was under twenty, for the mother had no man to tend the land, so she thought best to let her go. And after her baby being born, she never got strong but stopped in the bed, and a great many doctors saw her but did her no good.

And one day the mother was at Mass at the chapel and she got a start, for she thought she saw her daughter come in to the chapel with

the same shawl and clothes on her that she had before she took to the bed, but when they came out from the chapel, she wasn't there. So she went to the house, and asked was she after going out, and what they told her was as if she got a blow, for they said the girl hadn't ten minutes to live, and she was dead before ten minutes were out. And she appears now sometimes; they see her drawing water from the well at night and bringing it into the house, but they find nothing there in the morning.

A Connemara Man:

There was a man had come back from Boston, and one day he was out in the bay, going towards Aran with £3 worth of cable he was after getting from McDonagh's store in Galway. And he was steering the boat, and there were two turf-boats along with him, and all in a minute they saw he was gone, swept off the boat with a wave and it a dead calm.

And they saw him come up once, straight up as if he was pushed, and then he was brought down again and rose no more.

And it was some time after that a friend of his in Boston, and that was coming home to this place, was in a crowd of people out there. And he saw him coming to him and he said, "I heard that you were drowned," and the man said, "I am not dead, but I was brought here, and when you go home, bring these three guineas to McDonagh in Galway for it's owed him for the cable I got from him."

And he put the three guineas in his hand and vanished away.

An Old Army Man:

I have seen hell myself. I had a sight of it one time in a vision. It had a very high wall around it, all of metal, and an archway in the wall, and a straight walk into it, just like what would be leading into a gentleman's orchard, but the edges were not trimmed with box but with red-hot metal. And inside the wall there were cross walks, and I'm not sure what there was to the right, but to the left there was five great furnaces and they full of souls kept there with great chains. So I turned short and went away; and in turning I looked again at the wall and I could see no end to it.

And another time I saw purgatory. It seemed to be in a level place and no walls around it, but it all one bright blaze, and the souls standing in it. And they suffer near as much as in hell, only there are no devils with them there, and they have the hope of heaven.

And I heard a call to me from there "Help me to come out of this!" And when I looked it was a man I used to know in the army, an Irishman and from this country, and I believe him to be a descendant of King O'Connor of Athenry. So I stretched out my hand first but then I called out "I'd be burned in the flames before I could get within three yards of you." So then he said, "Well, help me with your prayers," and so I do.

VII

APPEARANCES

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WHEN I had begun my search for folk-lore, the first to tell me he himself had seen the Sidhe was an old, perhaps half-crazed man I will call Michael Barrett (for I do not give the real names either of those who are living or who have left living relatives). I had one day asked an old woman who had been spinning wool for me, to be made into frieze by our weavers, if she had ever seen the faery host. She said, "I never saw them myself nor I don't think much of them; it is God that takes us or leaves us as He will. But a neighbouring man was standing in my door last night, and there's no day of the year he doesn't hear them or feel them.

"It's in his head I think it does be, and when he stood in the door last night I said 'the wind does be always in my ears and the sound of it never stops,' to make him think it was the same with him. But he said, 'I hear them singing and making music all the time, and one of them's after bringing out a little flute, and it's on it he's playing to them.' Sure he has half his chimney pulled down, where they used to be sitting and singing to him day and night. But

those that are born in the daytime never have power to see or hear them all their life."

Another neighbour talked to me of him and said, "One night he was walking across the bog, and a lurcher, a bastard hound, with him. And something ran across the path in the shape of a white cat, and the lurcher went after him, and Barrett went home and to bed and left the door open for the lurcher to come in. And in the morning they found it there, lying under the table, and it paralysed and not able to stir. But after a few months it got better, and one night they were crossing the bog again and the same thing ran across their path, and this time in the form of a deer. But the dog wouldn't follow it again, but shrank behind Barrett until such time as it had passed by."

My spinning woman, coming another time with chickens to sell, said, "Barrett is after telling me this morning that they were never so bad as these last two nights. 'Friday fine-day' is what they say now, in Irish, and he got no sleep till he threatened to throw dirty water over them. The poor man, they do say they are mostly in his head now, but sure he was a fine fresh man twenty years ago, the night he saw them all linked in two lots, like slips of girls walking together. And it was that very same day that Hession's little girl got a touch from them. She was as fine a little girl as ever you saw, and her mother sent her into Gort to do a message. And on the road she met a red-haired woman, with long wisps of hair as bright as silver, and she said, 'Where are you going

and who are you?' 'I'm going to Gort on a message,' says she, 'and I'm Mrs. Hession's daughter of such a place.' Well, she came home, and that very night she got a pain in her thigh, with respects to you, and she and her mother have half the world walked since then, trying to get relief for her; but never a bit better did she ever get. And no doubt at all but that's the very same day Michael Barrett saw them *in the field near Hession's house."*

I asked Mr. Yeats to come with me to see the old man, and we walked up the long narrow lane, from which we could see Slieve Echtge and the Burren hills, to the little cabin with its broken chimney where Michael Barrett told us of those that had disturbed his rest. This was the first time we went together to enquire into the Hierarchy of the Sidhe, of which by degrees we have gathered so much traditional and original knowledge.

As to old Barrett, I saw him from time to time, and he told me he was still "tormented," and that "there is one that sat and sang b-b-b all the night" til a few evenings before he had got a bit of rag and tied it to a long stick, and hit at him when he came, and drove him out with the rest. And in the next spring I heard he was ill, and that "on Saturday he had been told by three he was to die." When I visited him I found him better, and he said that since the warning on Saturday they had left him alone "and the children that used to be playing about with them have gone to some other place; found the house too cold for them maybe." That was the last time I saw him; I am

glad I had been able to help him to more warmth and comfort before the end.

I asked the old man's brother, a labourer, what he thought of Michael's visions, but he made little of them. "Old he is, and it's all in the brain the things he does be talking of. If it was a young man told us of them we might believe him, but as to him, we pay no attention to what he says at all. Those things are passed away, and you—I beg your pardon for using that word—a person—hears no more of them.

"John Casey saw queer things? So he might. Them that travel by night, why wouldn't they see queer things? But they'd see nothing if they went to their bed quiet and regular.

"Lydon that had the contract for the schoolhouse, we didn't mind much what he said happened him the night he slept there alone, and in the morning he couldn't stir across the floor from the place where he was. But who knows? Maybe he had too much drink taken before he went to bed. It was no wonder in the old times if there was signs and the like where murder had been. But that's come to an end, and time for it.

"There's another man, one Doran, has the same dreams and thoughts as my brother, and he leaves pieces of silver on the wall; and when they're took—it's the faeries! But myself I believe it's the boys do be watching him.

"No, these things are gone from the world, and there's not the same dread of death there used to be. When we die we go to judgment, and the places we'll get there, they won't be the same as what we had here.

The charitable, the kind-hearted, lady or gentleman, who'd have a chance if they didn't? But the tyrants and schemers, what chance will there be for the like of them?"

"You will have a good place there, Barrett, you and John Farrell. You have done your work better than most of us through all your life, and it's likely you'll be above us there."

"I did my work all my life, fair and honest every day; and now that I'm old, I'll keep on the same track to the last. Like a horse that might be racing at Galway racecourse or another, there might be eight leaps or ten leaps he might be frightened at; but when he's once over the last leap there's no fear of him. Why would he fail then, with the winning post so near at hand?"

I was told by A Gatekeeper:

There was once a family, the O'Hagans living in Dromore Hill, that now belongs to you, well-to-do people. And one day the son that had been at college was coming back, and there was a great dinner being made in the house. And a girl was sent off to a spring by the forth to get some water, and when she passed by the forth, she heard like the crying of a child and some one said to it "Nothing given to us today, no milk spilled for us, nothing laid out for us, but tonight we'll have what we want and there will be waste and overflow." And that evening the young man that was coming home got a fall from his horse, and was killed, and all the grand things for the dinner were thrown about and went to loss. So never begrudge the drop of milk you'll spill, or the bit you'll let fall, it might turn all to good in the end.

One night at the house below it was just getting dark, and a man came in the gate and to the door and came in and fell down on a chair. And when I saw him shaking and his face so white, I thought it was the *fear gortha* (the hungry grass) he had walked on, and I called to the wife to give him something to eat. But he would take nothing

but a cup of water with salt in it, and when he got better he told us that when he was passing the big tree a man and a woman came out and came along with him. They didn't speak but they walked on each side of him, and then the woman seemed to go away, but the man's step was with him till he came in at the gate.

There was a girl of the Heniffs brought the dinner one day to where the men were working near where the river rises at Coole. And when she had left the dinner she began to gather kippeens, and put them in her shawl, and began to twist a rope of the ends of it to tie them up. And at that moment she was taken up, and where she found herself was in Galway, sitting in the Square. And she had no money, and she began to think of the friends she had there and to say, "If they knew where I was they'd give me money to bring me back." And in those days there was a coach that ran from Galway to Kiltartan, and she found herself in it, and it starting, and it left her safe and sound again at home.

Mrs. Casey:

There was a girl at Tyrone was bringing back some apples out of the garden there. And on the road she met a man, and she thought that he was one of the old St. Georges, and he asked where did she get the apples, and bid her put them down in the road, and when she opened the bundle they

were all turned to eggs. So she put them up again and brought them home, and when she and her mother looked at them in the house they were beginning to crack, and the chickens to put their beaks through them; so they put them in the corner of the kitchen for the night, and in the morning when they went to look at them they were all turned to apples again, but they thought best not to eat them.

A Munster Woman:

There was a woman I knew in County Limerick, near Foynes—Mrs. Doolan, a nurse. She was called out of bed one night by a small man with a lamp, and he led her to a place she had never seen before, and into a house, and there was a woman in a bed and the child was born after she came. And I always heard her say it was a faery she attended. And the man led her back and gave her a sovereign, and bid her change it before sunrise.

And I know a boy lived on Lord Dunraven's property, one of a family of large farmers, and he had a settle-bed in the kitchen, and one night he saw the kitchen full of them, and they making up the fire and cooking, and they set out the table and ate at it.

I often heard they'd fight in November at the time of harvest, and my father told me that in the year of the famine there was great fighting heard

up in the sky, and they were crying out, "Black potatoes, black potatoes, we'll have them now." I suppose it was one tribe of them fighting against another for them. And the oats in that year were all black as well as the potatoes.

A Clare Man:

I saw them myself one night I was going to Ennis with a load of straw. It was when we came to Bunnahow and the moon was shining, and I was on the top of the load of straw, and I saw them in a field. Just like jockeys they were, and riding horses, red clothes and caps they had like a jockey would have, but they were small. They had a screen of bushes put up in the field and some of the horses would jump over it, and more of them would baulk when they'd be put to it. The men that were with me didn't see them, they were walking in the road, but they heard the sound of the horses.

Another Clare Man:

I heard a churning one time in the hill up by the road beyond. I was coming back from Kinvara, and I heard it plain, no mistake about it. I was sorry after I didn't call down and ask for a drink. Johnny Moon did so, and got it. If you wish for a drink and they put it out for you, it's no harm to take it, but if you refuse it, some harm might happen to you. Johnny Henderson often told that he heard churning in that spot, but I

wouldn't believe the sun rising from him, he had so many lies. But after that, I said, "Well, Johnny Henderson has told the truth for once anyhow."

A Miller:

There was Tom Gantly one evening was going to Coole, and he heard a step behind him and it followed him every bit of the way, till he got to the hall door of Coole House; but he could see nothing.

He saw a gig one night on the road there by the wall and it full of ladies laughing and grandly dressed—the best of hats and feathers they had. And it turned and passed him a second time. And with the fright he got, he never would pass that bit of road by himself again.

There were two men went one night to catch rabbits in that field you have let now to Father Fahy, and the one next it. And when they were standing there they heard a churning below. So they went on a little way, and they heard a tambourine below, music going on and the beating of a drum. So they moved a little farther on and then they heard the sound of a fiddle from below. So they came home and caught no rabbits that night.

J. Creevy:

May is a great time with these strangers, and November is a bad month for them, and this

month you're in now. I was trying the other day in the town to get a marriage made up for a girl that was seduced—and the family wouldn't have it this month because of that.

One night on the Kiltartan road I saw a flock of wool by the road side, and I gave a kick at it and it didn't move, and then another kick and it didn't move. So it can have been no natural thing.

And Lee told me that one night he saw red men riding through the country and going over ditches.

One time I was sick in the bed and I heard music, and I sat up and said: "Is it music I hear, or is it the squealing of pigs?" And they all said they could hear nothing. But I could hear it for a long time, and it the grandest I ever heard—and like a melodeon. And as to the tune, I couldn't tell what it was but I know that I had heard it before.

A Kerry Piper:

One time in Kerry there was a coach coming after me and it passed beside me, and I saw with it Mrs. Mitchell from the big house. And when it came near the bridge it sank into the earth, and I saw no more of it.

And one time I was at Ennistymon I saw the ass-car and the woman and the man out before

me. I had a little ass of my own at that time, and I followed them thinking to overtake them, but when I was in the hollow they were on the hill, and when I was on the hill they were in the hollow. And when they got near to the bridge that is over the big river, they were not to be seen. For they can never cross over a mering (boundary) that is a river.

J. Fagan:

One time I was at a party and I didn't leave the house till 2 o'clock so you may think it was late in the night before I got home. And after a while I looked back and I saw some one coming after me, a little old woman about so high (3 feet) and she wearing a white cap with a frilled border, and a red square and a red flannel petticoat. I set off to run when I saw her, for at that time I had the run of a hare, but when I got near home I looked back and she was after me still. When I got inside the door I fell on my two knees. And it was seven years before I got the better of that fright. And from that time to this I never got the run again that I used to have.

There was a respectable woman, Mrs. Gaynor, living in Cloon, told me that whenever she went out of Cloon in the direction of Fiddane in one part of the road there was a woman sometimes met her, that she saw at no other time, and every time she'd meet her she'd spit in her face.

There is a family at Tirneevan and they were having a wedding there. And when it was going on, the wine ran short, and the spirits ran out and they didn't know what to do to get more, Gort being two miles away. And two or three strange people came in that they had never seen before. And when they found what was wanting they said that they'd go get it. And in a few minutes they were back with the spirits and the wine—and no place to get it nearer than Gort.

There was a herd's house up at Burren that no one could live in. But one Holland from Tirneevan said he'd take the place, and try how would he get on there. So he went with his family, and the first day the daughter made the place clean and swept it, and then she went out for a can of milk. And when she was coming in the door, it was knocked out of her hand and spilled over her. And that evening when they sat down to their supper the door opened and eight or nine people came in, and a red man among them. And they sat down and ate. And then they showed Holland one side of the room, and bid him to keep it always clean, and spring water in it.

A Herd:

There was a man woke about three o'clock one morning and he bade the servant girl go down and make the fire and put on the potatoes, where he

had to be going out early. So she went down and there she saw one of *them* sitting by the hearth in the kitchen. So she ran upstairs with the fright she got to where the man was in bed with his wife. So then he went down himself, and he saw one of them sure enough sitting by the fire and he asked "How did you come in?" And he said, "By the lock-hole of the door." And the man said, "There's the pot full of potatoes and you might as well have used a few of them." And he said, "We have them used already; and you think now they are potatoes, but when you put the pot down on the fire you'll see they are no more than horse dung."

Thomas Cloonan:

One night my father was beyond on the other side of the lake, going to watch an otter where the water goes away underground. And he heard voices talking, and he thought one was the voice of Father Nagle the parish priest of Kilbecanty, and the other the voice of Father Hynes from Cloon that does be late out fishing for eels. And when he came to where the voices were, there was no one at all in it. And he went and sat in the cave, where the water goes under, and there was a great noise like as if planks were being thrown down overhead. And you may think how frightened he was when he never took off his boots to cross the river, but run through it just as he was and never stopped till he got to the house.

Mrs. Cloonan:

Two men I saw one time over in Inchy. I was sitting milking the cow and she let a snore and I looked up and I saw the two men, small men, and their hands and their feet the smallest ever I saw, and hats turned back on their heads, but I did not see their faces. Then the cow rose her foot, and I thought, "it will be worse for me if she'll put her foot down on me," and I looked at her, and when I looked up again they were gone. Mrs. Stafford told me it was not for me they came, but for the cow, Blackberry, that died soon after.

There was a man in Gort was brought for a while to Tir-na-Og, that is a part of heaven.

McGarrity that was coming back one night to the new house beyond the lake saw two children, two little girls they were, standing beside the house. Paddy told me that, and he said they came there to foretell him he was stopping there too late.

John Phelan:

I never saw them nor felt them all my life, and I walking the place night and day, except one time when for twelve nights I slept in the little house beyond, in the kitchen garden where the apples were being robbed that time because there was no one living at home. In the night-time in the loft above my head I used to hear a scratching and a scraping, and one time a plank that was above in

it began to move about. But I had no fear but stopped there, but I did not put off my clothes nor stretch myself on the bed for twelve nights. They say that one man that slept in the same house was found in the morning choked in his bed and the door locked that they had to burst it in.

And in old Richard Gregory's time there was one Horan slept there, and one night he ran out of it and out of the Gort gate and got no leave to put his clothes on. But there's some can see those things and more that can't, and I'm one of those that can't. Walking Coole demesne I am these forty years, days and nights, and never met anything worse than myself.

But one night standing by the vinery and the moon shining, on a sudden a wind rose and shook the trees and rattled the glass and the slates, and no wind before, and it stopped as sudden as it came. And there were two bunches of grapes gone, and them that took them took them by the chimney and no other way.

James Hill:

One night since I lived here I found late at night that a black jennet I had at that time had strayed away. So I took a lantern and went to look for him, and found him near Doherty's house at the bay. And when I took him by the halter, I put the light out and led him home. But surely as I walked there was a footstep behind me all the way home.

I never rightly believed in them till I met a priest about two years ago coming out from the town that asked his way to Mrs. Canan's, the time she was given over, and he told me that one time his horse stopped and wouldn't pass the road, and the man that was driving said, "I can't make him pass." And the priest said, "It will be the worse for you, if I have to come down into the road." For he knew some bad thing was there. And he told me the air is full of them. But Father Dolan wouldn't talk of such things, very proud he is, and he coming of no great stock.

One night I was driving outside Coole gate—close to where the Ballinamantane farm begins. And the mare stopped, and I got off the car to lead her, but she wouldn't go on. Two or three times I made her start and she'd stop again. Something she must have seen that I didn't see.

Beasts will sometimes see more than a man will. There were three young chaps I knew went up by the river to hunt coneens one evening, and they threw the dog over the wall. And when he was in the field he gave a yelp and drew back as if something frightened him.

Another time my father was going early to some place, and my mother had a noggin of turnips boiled for him the night before, to give him something to eat before he'd start. So they got up very early and she lighted the fire and put the

oven hanging over it for to warm the turnips, and then she went back to bed again. And my father was in a hurry and he went out and brought in a sheaf of wheaten straw to put under the oven, the way it would make a quick blaze. And when he came in, the oven had been taken off the hook, and was put standing in the hearth, and no mortal had been there. So he was afraid to stop, and he went back to the bed, and till daybreak they could hear something that was knocking against the pot. And the servant girl that was in the house, she awoke and heard quick steps walking to the stable, and the door of it giving a screech as if it was being opened. But in the morning there was no sign there or of any harm being done to the pot.

Then the girl remembered that she had washed her feet the night before, and had never thought to throw out the water. And it's well known to wash the feet and not to throw the water out, brings some harm—except you throw fire into the vessel it stands in.

Simon Niland:

Late one night I was out walking, and a gun in my hand, and I was going down a little avenue of stones, and I heard after me the noise of a horse's steps. So I stopped and sat down on the stile, for I thought, the man that's with the horse, I'll have his company a bit of the way. But the noise got louder like as if it was twenty horses coming, and then I was knocked down, and I put out my foot to

save the gun from being broken. But when I got up there was no hurt on me or on the gun, and the noise was all gone, and the place quiet. It was maybe four year after that or six, I was walking the same path with the priest and a few others, for a whale had come ashore, and the jaw-bones of it were wanted to make the piers of a gate. And the priest said to me, "Did you ever hear of the battle of Troy?" "I didn't hear but I read about it," says I. "Well," says he, "there was a man at that time called Simon, and they found that whenever he came out with them to fight there was luck with them, and when he wasn't with them, there'd be no luck. And that's why we put you in front of us, to lead us on the path, you having the same name." So that put it in my head, and I told him about what happened that night, and I said, "Now would you believe that?" "I would," says he. "And what are such things done by?" says I. "The fallen angels," he said, "for they have power to do such things and to raise wind and storm, but yet they have the hope of salvation at the last."

One clear night and the moon shining, I was walking home down this road, and I had a strong dog at that time. And just here where you stand he began to bark at something and he made rushes at it, and made as if he was worrying it, but I could see nothing, though if it had been even the size of a rat I must have seen it, the night was so

clear. And I had to leave him at last and heard him barking and I was at the house-door before he came up with me.

I know a good many on the island have seen *those*, but they wouldn't say what they are like to look at, for when they see them their tongue gets like a stone.

Mrs. Hynes of Slieve Echtge:

When you see a blast of wind pass, pick a green rush and throw it after them, and say, "God speed you." There they all are, and maybe the *stroke lad* at the end of them.

There was a neighbour of mine in late with me one night, and when he was going home, just as he passed that little road you see, a big man came over the wall in front of him, and was growing bigger as he went, till he nearly fainted with the fright he got.

They can do everything. They can raise the wind, and draw the storm.

And to Drogheda they go for wine, for the best wine is in the cellars there.

An Islander:

One night I and another lad were coming along the road, and the dog began to fight, as if he was fighting another dog, but we could see nothing and

we called him off but he wouldn't come. And when we got home he answered us, and he seemed as if tired out.

There was a strange woman came to this island one day and told some of the women down below what would happen to them. And they didn't believe her, she being a stranger, but since that time, it's all been coming true.

Mrs. Casey:

I knew a woman that every night after she went to bed used to see some sort of a shadow that used to appear to her. So she went to some old woman, and she told her to sprinkle holy water about and to put a blackthorn stick beside her bed. So she got the stick and put it there and sprinkled the holy water, and it never appeared since then. Three sorts of holy water she got, from the priest and from the friars and from some blessed well. And she has them in three pint bottles in the window, and she'd kill you if you so much as looked at them.

A Fisherman:

I never saw anything myself, but one day I was going over the fields near Killeen, and it the quietest day of summer you ever saw. And all of a sudden I heard a great noise like thunder, and a blast of wind passed by me that laid the thistles low, and then all was quiet again. It might be

that they were changing, for they change from place to place.

I would not give in to faeries myself but for one thing. There was a little boy of my own, and there was a wedding going to be here, and there was no bread in the house, and none to be had in Kilcolgan, and I bade him to go to Kinvara for bread. I pulled out the ass-car for him and he set out.

And from that time he was never the same, and now he is in the asylum at Ballinasloe.

Did he tell what happened? He never told me anything, but he told a neighbour that he met awful looking people on the road to Kinvara just about midnight, and that whatever they did to him, he could never recover it.

A Carter:

Often and often I heard things. A great shouting I heard one night inside Coole demesne,—a hurling it must have been. Another time I was passing at night-time, near Reed the weaver's, and there were rocks thrown at me all along the road, but they did not touch me, and I could not see any one thing there. But I never went that road again at night-time.

It's said those that die are left in the place where they lived to do their penance. Often and often when I came to that house below, I felt knocks under the bed, and like some one walking over it.

Two men I know were going from Gort one

night, and there near the wall of the demesne they saw two men ploughing, and they asked one another what could they be to be ploughing by night. And then they saw that as they ploughed, the land was going away from them, and they were gone themselves, and they saw them no more.

An Old Woman who was Housekeeper to the Donnellans:

I'll tell you how the fortune of the family began.

It was Tully O'Donnellan was riding home from Ballinasloe, or some other place, and it was raining, and he came to a river that was in flood, and there used to be no bridges in those times. And when he was going to ride through the river, he saw the *greasa* leprechaun on the bank, and he offered him a lift, and he stooped down and lifted him up behind him on the horse.

And when he got near where the castle was, he saw it in flames before him. And the leprechaun said, "Don't fret after it but build a new castle in the place I'll show you, about a stone's throw from the old one." "I have no money to do that," said Tully Donnellan. "Never mind that," said the leprechaun, "but do as I bid you, and you'll have plenty." So he did as he bade him, and the morning after he went to live in the new castle, when he went into that room that has the stone with his name on it now, it was full up of gold, and you could be turning it like you'd turn potatoes into a shovel. And when the children would go

into the room with their father and mother, the nurses would put bits of wax on their shoes, the way bits of the gold would stick to them. And they had great riches and smothered the world with it, and they used to shoe their horses with silver. It was in racing they ran through it, and keeping hounds and horses and horns.

Old Pegs Kelly:

I seen the Sheogue but once, and that was five or six years ago, and I walking the railway where I was looking after my little hens that do be straying. And I saw them coming along, and in a minute I was in the middle of them. Shavings, and shavings, and shavings going along the road as fast as they could go. And I knew there was no shavings to be seen this many year, since the stakes were made for the railway down at Nolan's, and the carpenter that made them dead, and the shop where he made them picked clean. And I knew well they were the horses the Sheogue did be riding. But some that saw them said they looked like bits of paper. And I threw three stones after them and I heard them cry out as they went. And that night the roof was swept off Tom Dermot's house in Ryanrush and haystacks blown down. And John Brady's daughter that was daft those many years was taken, and Tom Horan's little girl that was picking potatoes, she and her brothers together. She turned black all of a minute and three days after, she was dead.

That's the only time I seen them, and that I never may again, for believe me that time I had my enough, thinking as I did that I hadn't more than three minutes to live.

A Herd's Wife:

Martin's new wife is a fine big woman, if she is lucky. But it's not a lucky house. That's what happened the last wife that lost her baby and died. William Martin knows well *they* are in it, but he is a dark man and would say nothing. I saw them myself about the house one time, and I met one on the forth going through the fields; he had the appearance of a man in his clothes. And sometimes when I look over at Martin's house there is a very dark look like a dark cloud over it and around it.

The other Army Man:

The faeries are all fallen angels. Father Folan told us from the altar that they're as thick as the sands of the sea all about us, and they tempt poor mortals. But as for carrying away women and the like, there's many that says so, but they have no proof. But you have only to bid them begone and they will go. One night myself I was after walking back from Kinvara, and down by the wood beyond I felt one coming beside me, and I could feel the horse that he was riding on and the way that he lifted his legs, but they didn't make a sound like the hoofs of a horse. So I stopped and

turned around and said very loud "Be off!" And he went and never troubled me after. And I knew a man that was dying, and one came up on his bed and he cried out to it, "Get out of that, you unnatural animal!" And it left him. There's a priest I heard of that was looking along the ground like as if he was hunting for something, and a voice said to him "If you want to see them you'll see enough of them," and his eyes were opened and he saw the ground thick with them. Singing they do be sometimes and dancing, but all the time they have the cloven foot.

Fallen angels they are, and after they fell God said, "Let there be Hell, and there it was in a moment"—("God save us! It's a pity He said that word and there might have been no Hell today" *murmurs the wife*). And then He asked the devil what would he take for the souls of all the people. And the devil said nothing would satisfy him but the blood of a Virgin's Son. So he got that and then the gates of Hell were opened.

The Wife:

I never seen anything, although one night I was out after a cow till 2 o'clock in the morning and old Gantly told me he wondered at me to be out in this place, by the wood near the white gate where he saw a thing himself one night passing. But it's only them that's living in mortal sin can see such things, that's so Thomas, whatever you may say. But your ladyship's own place is

middling free from them, but Ratlin's full of them.

And there's many say they saw the banshee, and that if she heard you singing loud, she'd be very apt to bring you away with her.

A Piper:

There was an old priest I knew—Father McManus—and when he would go walking in the green lawn before the house, his man, Keary, would go with him, and he carrying three sticks. And after a while the priest would say, "*Cur do maide*"—Fire your stick—as far as you can, and he would throw it. And he would say the same thing a second and a third time, and after that he would say, "We have no more to protect us now," and he would go in. And another priest I was talking to the other day was telling me they are between earth and air and the grass is full of them.

Mrs. Casey:

There was a boy I knew at Tyrone was a great card player. And one night about 10 o'clock he was coming home from a party, and he had the cards in his hands and he shuffling them as he went along. And presently he saw a man before him on the road, and the man stopped till he came up, and when he saw the cards, he says "Stop here and I'll have a game with you," for the moon was shining bright. So the boy sat down, and the stranger asked him had he any money, and he

said he had five shillings after the night's play. "Well," says the man, "we'll play the first game for half-a-crown." So they sat down and put out the money on a flagstone that was much like a table, and they began to play, and the first game was won by the stranger. "Well now," says he, "we'll have another." So the boy began to shuffle the cards, but as he did, one card dropped on the ground, and he stooped down for it, and when he did, he saw the man's feet that were partly under the flagstone, and they were like the feet of a cow. So with the fright he got, he jumped up and began to run and never stopped till he got inside his house and had the door shut. And when he had been sitting there a few minutes, a knock came to the door, and he heard the voice of the stranger say, "It's well for you you ran away when you did, or you'd be where I am now." And he heard no more; it was the boy himself told me this.

I hear them in this house ever since the first night I came, in the kitchen, when all are in bed. Footsteps, I wouldn't think so much of, but scraping the potatoes, that's another thing.

A daughter I had that went to America died there, and the brother that came back told me that he was with her, and she going, and surely they all heard the jennet coming to the door, and when they opened it, there was nothing there, and many people standing and waiting about it. I knew a woman died beyond in Boher and left a

house full of children and the night she died there was a light seen in the sick house.

To leave a few cold potatoes, the first of them, outside, you should surely do it, and not to leave the house without spring water. I knew a boy that was sleeping up in the loft of a house and one night they had forgotten to leave water within in the kitchen. And about midnight he awoke and he saw through a hole in the loft two women, and one of them just after having a baby. And they said, "What way will we wash the child, and no water here; we must take the pan of milk down from the shelf." So the boy said out loud the way they'd hear him, "I must go for spring water. I forgot to leave it below." So he went and got it and left it there, and let on not to see them. And—for I forget what time after that—there was no morning he put his clothes on but he'd find a half-crown in his boot. To do you harm? No, but the best of neighbours they are, if you don't chance to offend them.

A Schoolmaster:

In Donegal one night some of the people were at a still in the mountains, and on a sudden they heard a shot fired, and they thought it was a signal given to the police, and they made home to the village. And all the night they could hear like the tramp of horses and of police and the noise of cars passing by, but nothing could be seen. And

next day the police came in earnest, and searched about the place where they had been at work at the still, but no one was there and they found nothing. So they knew it was a warning they were after being given.

John Madden:

One day old Fogarty of Clough was cutting rods in Coole with a black-handled knife, and he put it in his pocket, and presently he felt for it and it was gone. But when he went home and went into the house, there was the knife lying on the table.

My wife's brother was on a cock of hay in that field beyond one time, and he sat down to rest and he saw them hurling in red caps and blue, and a crowd looking in at them. But he said nothing to the men that were with him. They are mostly in forths and lonesome places.

An old man, Kelleher, living in the Wicklow Mountains, told me and W. B. Yeats and Miss Pollexfen:

I often saw them when I had my eyesight; one time they came about me, shouting and laughing and there were spouts of water all around me. And I thought that I was coming home, but I was not on the right path and couldn't find it and went wandering about, but at last one of them said, "Good-evening, Kelleher," and they went away, and then in a moment I saw where I was by the

stile. They were very small, like little boys and girls, and had red caps.

I always saw them like that, but they were bigger at the butt of the river; they go along the course of the rivers. Another time they came about me playing music and I didn't know where I was going, and at last one of them said the same way, "Good evening, Kelleher," and I knew that I was at the gate of the College; it is the sweetest music and the best that can be heard, like melodeons and fifes and whistles and every sort.

Mrs. Kelleher says: I often hear that music too, I hear them playing drums.

K.: We had one of them in the house for a while, it was when I was living up at Ticnock, and it was just after I married that woman there that was a nice slip of a girl at that time. It was in the winter and there was snow on the ground, and I saw one of them outside, and I brought him in and put him on the dresser, and he stopped in the house for a while, for about a week.

Mrs. K.: It was more than that, it was two or three weeks.

K.: Ah! maybe it was—I'm not sure. He was about fifteen inches high. He was very friendly. It is likely he slept on the dresser at night. When the boys at the public-house were full of porter, they used to come to the house to look at him, and they would laugh to see him but I never let them hurt him. They said I would be made up, that he would bring me some riches, but I never got

them. We had a cage here, I wish I had put him in it, I might have kept him till I was made up.

Mrs. K.: It was a cage we had for a thrush. We thought of putting him into it, but he would not have been able to stand in it.

K.: I'm sorry I didn't keep him—I thought sometimes to bring him into Dublin to sell him.

Mrs. K.: You wouldn't have got him there.

K.: One day I saw another of the kind not far from the house, but more like a girl and the clothes greyer than his clothes, that were red. And that evening when I was sitting beside the fire with the Missus I told her about it, and the little lad that was sitting on the dresser called out, "That's Geoffrey-a-wee that's coming for me," and he jumped down and went out of the door and I never saw him again. I thought it was a girl I saw, but Geoffrey wouldn't be the name of a girl, would it?

He had never spoken before that time. Somehow I think that he liked me better than the Missus. I used to feed him with bread and milk.

Mrs. K.: I was afraid of him—I was afraid to go near him, I thought he might scratch my eyes out—I used to leave bread and milk for him but I would go away while he was eating it.

K.: I used to feed him with a spoon, I would put the spoon to his mouth.

Mrs. K.: He was fresh-looking at the first, but after a while he got an old look, a sort of wrinkled look.

K.: He was fresh-looking enough, he had a hardy look.

Mrs. K.: He was wearing a red cap and a little red cloth skirt.

K.: Just for the world like a Highlander.

Mrs. K.: He had a little short coat above that; it was checked and trousers under the skirt and long stockings all red. And as to his shoes, they were tanned, and you could hardly see the soles of them, the sole of his foot was like a baby's.

K.: The time I lost my sight, it was a Thursday evening, and I was walking through the fields. I went to bed that night, and when I rose up in the morning, the sight was gone. The boys said it was likely I had walked on one of their paths. Those small little paths you see through the fields are made by *them.*

They are very often in the quarries; they have great fun up there, and about Peacock Well. The Peacock Well was blessed by a saint, and another well near, that cures the headache.

I saw one time a big grey bird about the cow-house, and I went to a comrade-boy and asked him to come and to help me to catch it, but when we came back it was gone. It was very strange-looking and I thought that it had a head like a man.

Old Manning:

I never saw them except what I told you, the dog fighting, and I heard the horses, and at that

same time I saw smoke coming out of the ground near Foley's house at Corker, by the gate.

My mother lived for twenty years in Coole, and she often told me that when she'd pass Shanwalla hill there would people come out and meet her and—with respects to you—they'd spit in her face.

Faeries of course there are and there's many poor souls doing their penance, and how do we know where they may be doing it?

A Farmer:

I might not believe myself there are such things but for what happened not long after I was married when my first little girl was but a week old. I had gone up to Ballybrit to tie some sheep and put fetters on them, and I was waiting for Haverty to come and help me tie them. The baby was a little unwell that day but I was not uneasy about her. But while I was waiting for Haverty, a blast of wind came through the field and I heard a voice say quite clear out of it "Katie is gone." That was the little one, we had called her Catherine, but though she wasn't a week in the world, we had it shortened already to Kate. And sure enough, the child got worse, and we attended her through the night, and before daybreak she was gone.

An Army Man:

Two nights ago a travelling man came and knocked at John Hanlon's house at 11 o'clock,

where he saw a light in the window and he asked would there be any one out hurling so late as that. For in coming by the field beyond the chapel he saw it full of people, some on horses, and hurling going on, and they were all dressed like soldiers, and you would hear their swords clinking as they ran. And he was not sure were they faeries till he asked John Hanlon was it the custom of people in this country to go hurling so late as that. But that was always a great field for them. From eleven to two, that is the time they have for play, but they must go away before the cock crows. And the cock will crow sometimes as early as 1 o'clock, a right one.

It was in the night that Christ our Saviour rose there were some Jews sitting around the fire, and a cock boiling in the pot. And one of them said, "He'll never rise again until that cock crows." And the cock rose out of the pot and crowed, and he that was speaking got scalded with the water that was splashed about.

A Connemara Man:

One night I was sleeping over there by the dresser and I heard them ("Would you say the day of the week," *says the old woman.* "It's Thursday," said I. "Thank you," *says the old man, and goes on*)—I heard them thick all about the house —but what they were saying I couldn't know.

The Old Woman:

It was my uncle that was away at nights and knew the time his horse fell in the ditch, and he out at sea. And another day he was working at the bridge and he said, "Before this day is over, a man will be killed here." And so it happened, and a man was killed there before 12 o'clock. He was in here one day with me, and I said, "I don't give in to you being away and such things." And he says: "Um, Um, Um," three times, and then he says, "May your own living be long." We had a horse, the grandest from this to Galway, had a foal when in this place—and before long, both horse and foal died. And I often can hear them galloping round the house, both horse and foal. And I not the only one, but many in the village even hear them too.

Young Mrs. Phelan:

Often I saw a light in the wood at Derreen, above Ballyturn. It would rise high over the trees going round and round. I'd see it maybe for fifteen minutes at a time, and then it would fall like a lamp.

In the month of May is their chief time for changing, and it's then there's blowing away of hay and such things and great disturbance.

A Mayo Man:

One time I was led astray in a town, in Golden Hill in Staffordshire. I was in the streets and I

didn't know what way to turn all of a sudden, and every street looked like a wood before me, and so I went on until I met some man I knew, and I asked him where I was, and I went in, and stayed drinking with the others till 10 o'clock and I went home sober.

I saw the white rabbit too at Golden Hill. (*One of the other men puts in,* "There is always a white rabbit seen there, that turns into a woman before any misfortune happens, such as an accident.") I was walking along the road, and it ran beside me, and then I saw a woman in white before me on the road, and when I got to her, she was gone. And that evening a woman in a house near by fell dead on her own doorstep.

Another time near this, I was passing the barn where Johnny Rafferty the carpenter and his son used to be working, but it was shut and locked and no one in it. But when I came near it, I felt as if I was walking on wood, and my hair stood up on my head, and I heard the noise of tools, and hammering and sawing in it.

Pete Heffernan:

Old Doran told me that he was near Castle Hacket one time and saw them having a fair, buying and selling for all the world like ourselves, common people. But you or I or fifty others might have been there like him and not seen them. It's only them that are born at midnight that has the second sight.

Fallen angels, they say they are. And they'd

do more harm than what they do but for the hope they have that some day they may get to heaven. Very small they are, and go into one another so that what you see might only be a sort of a little bundle. But to leave a couple of cold potatoes about at night one should always do it, and to sweep the hearth clean. Who knows when they might want to come in and warm themselves.

Not to keep the water you wash your feet in in the house at night, not to throw it out of the door where it might go over them, but to take it a bit away from the house, and if by any means you can, to keep a bit of light burning at night, if you mind these three things you'll never be troubled with them.

That woman of mine was going to Mass one day early and she met a small little man, and him with a book in his hand. "Where are you going?" says he. "To the chapel beyond," says she. "Well," says he, "you'd better take care not to be coming out at this hour and disturbing people," says he. And when she got into the chapel she saw him no more.

An Old Woman with Oysters from Tyrone:

Oh, I wouldn't believe in the faeries, but it's no harm to believe in fallen angels!

Mrs. Day:

My own sons are all for education and read all books and they wouldn't believe now in the stories the old people used to tell. But I know one

Finnegan and his wife that went to Esserkelly churchyard to cry over her brother that was dead. And all of a sudden there came a pelt of a stone against the wall of the old church and no one there. And they never went again, and they had no business to be crying him and it not a funeral.

Francis, my son that's away now, he was out one morning before the daybreak to look at a white heifer in the field. And there he saw a little old woman, and she in a red cloak—crying, crying, crying. But he wouldn't have seen that if he had kept to natural hours.

There were three girls near your place, and they went out one time to gather cow-dung for firing. And they were sitting beside a small little hill, and while they were there, they heard a noise of churning, churning, in the ground beneath them. And as they listened, all of a minute, there was a naggin of milk standing beside them. And the girl that saw it first said, "I'll not drink of it lest they might get power over me." But the other girl said, "I'll bring it home and drink it." And she began to ridicule them. And because of she ridiculing them and not believing in them, that night in bed she was severely beaten so that she wasn't the better of it for a long time.

Often they'll upset a cart in the middle of the road, when there's no stone nor anything to upset it. And my father told me that sometimes after he had made the hay up into cocks, and on a day

without a breath of wind, they'd find it all in the next field lying in wisps. One time too the cart he was driving went over a leprechaun—and the old woman in the cart had like to faint.

Mr. Hosty of Slieve Echtge:

I never would have believed the shadow of a soul could have power, till that hurling match I saw that I told you about.

It was in the old time it happened, that there was war in heaven. He that was called the brightest of the angels raised himself up against God. And when they were all to be thrown out, St. Michael spoke up for them for he saw that when the heavens were weeded out they'd be left without company. So they were stopped in the falling, in the air and in the earth and in the sea. And they are about us sure enough, and whenever they'll be saved I don't know, but it is not for us to say what God will do in the end.

I often heard that our winter is their summer—sure they must have some time for setting their potatoes and their oats. But I remember a very old man used to say when he saw the potatoes black, that it was to them they were gone. "Sure" he used to say, "the other world must have its way of living as well as ourselves."

Mrs. Casey:

Dolan I was talking to the other day, and I asked him if faeries used not to be there. And he said,

"They're in it yet. There where you're standing, they were singing and dancing a few nights ago. And the same evening I saw two women down by the lake, and I thought it was the ladies from the house gone out for a walk, but when I came near, it was two strange women I saw, sitting there by the lake, and their wings came, and they vanished into the air."

John Phelan:

I was cutting trees in Inchy one time. And at 8 o'clock one morning when I got there, I saw a girl picking nuts with her hair hanging down over her shoulders, brown hair, and she had a good clean face and was tall and nothing on her head, and her dress was no way gaudy, but simple. And when she felt me coming, she gathered herself up and was gone as if the earth had swallowed her up. And I followed her and looked for her, but I never could see her again from that day to this, never again.

Mary Shannon:

There was a herd's house near Loughrea that had a bad name; and a strange woman came in one time and told the woman of the house that she must never throw dirty water out of the back-door. "For," said she, "if you had clean linen hanging there on a line before the fire, how would you like any one to come in and to throw dirty water over it?" And she bid her leave food always on the dresser.

"For," said she, "wherever you leave it we'll be able to find it." And she told how they often went into Loughrea to buy things, and provisions, and would look like any other person, and never be known, for they can make themselves visible or invisible as they like. You might be talking to one of them and never know she was different from another. At our place there used to be a good many of these people about, these Ingentry women or women from the North we sometimes call them. There was one came into the house one day and told my mother she didn't get all her butter in the milk. And she told her the servant-girl was stealing and hiding some of it, for in these days servants were cheap and we kept a couple; you'd get them for about five shillings a quarter. And my mother went to look, and then she went out of the house, and went off in a minute in a blast. And the husband that was coming into the house, he never saw her at all, and she going out of the door.

Sunset is a bad hour, and just before sunrise in the morning, and about 12 o'clock in the day, it's best not to be too busy or going about too much.

An Aran Man:

Sometimes they travel like a cloud, or like a storm. One day I was setting out the manure in my own garden and they came and rolled it in a heap and tossed it over the wall, and carried it out to sea beyond the lighthouse.

Mr. Fanning:

People say two days of the week, they name two days. Some say Thursday, and some say whatever day it is and the day before it, and then they can't be heard. In the village beyond, there were a good many people in a house one night, and lights in it, and talking, and of a sudden some one opened the door—and there outside and round the house they were listening to them—and when the door was open they were all seen, and made off as thick as crows to the forth near the Burren hills.

There was one Ward was walking one night near Castle Taylor, and in that big field that's near the corner where Burke was murdered he saw a big fire, and a lot of people round about it, and among them was a girl he used to know that had died.

Last week in that field beyond there, the hay was all taken up, and turned into the next field in wisps.

You must put the potatoes out for them before they are put on the table, for they would not touch them if they had been touched by common persons.

And I saw Horan that had the orchard here bought run to our house in the middle of the night naked with nothing on but his trousers, where he

was after being beat out of the house in the kitchen garden. Every night when he was going to bed there did a knocking come in the loft over his head, but he gave no attention to it. But a great storm came and a great lot of the apples was blown down and he gathered them up and filled the loft with them, thinking when he showed them to get compensation. And that is the night he was beat out of bed. And John Phelan knows well what things used to be in that house.

John Creevy:

My father? Yes indeed he saw many things, and I tell you a thing he told me, and there's no doubt in the earthly world about it. It was when they lived at Inchy they came over here one time for to settle a marriage for Murty Delvin's aunt. And when they had the business settled, they were going home again at dead of night. And a man was after getting married that day, one Delane from beyond Kilmacduagh, and the drag was after passing the road with him and his party going home. And all of a minute the road was filled with men on horses riding along, so that my father had to take shelter in Delane's big haggard by the roadside. And he heard the horsemen calling on Delane's name. And twenty-one days after, Delane lay dead.

There's no doubt at all about the truth of that, and they were no riders belonging to this world that were on those horses.

Thomas Brown:

There was a woman walking in the road that had a young child at home, and she met a very old man, having a baby in his arms. And he asked would she give it a drop of breast-milk. So she did, and gave it a drink. And the old man said: "It's well for you that you did that, for you saved your cow by it. But tomorrow look over the wall into the fields of the rich man that lives beyond the boundary, and you'll see that one of his was taken in the place of yours." And so it happened.

In the old times there used to be many stories of such things, half the world seemed to be on the *other side.*

I used not to believe in them myself, until one night I heard them hurling. I was coming home from town with Jamsie Flann; we were not drunk but we were hearty. Coming along the road beyond we heard them hurling in the field beside us. We could see nothing but we'd hear them hit the ball, and it fly past us like the lightning, so quick, and when they hit the goal, we heard a moan—"Oh! ah!"—that was all. But after we went a little way we sat down by a little hill to rest, and there we heard a thousand voices talking. What they said, we couldn't understand, or the language, but we knew that it was one side triumphing over the other.

But the nights are queer—surely they are queer by sea or by land. There was a friend of mine told

me he was out visiting one night, and coming home across the fields he came into a great crowd of them. They did him no harm, and among them he saw a great many he knew, that were dead, five or six out of our own village. And he was in his bed for two months after that, and he told the priest of it. He said he couldn't understand the talk, it was like the hissing of geese, and there was one very big man, that seemed the master of them, and his talk was like you'll hear in a barrel when it's being rolled.

There's a hill, Cruach-na-Sheogue down by the sea, and many have seen them there dancing in the moonlight.

There was a man told me he was passing near it one night, and the walls on each side of the road were all covered with people sitting on them, and he walked between, and they said nothing to him. And he knew many among them that were dead before that. Is it only the young go there? Ah, how do we know what use they may have for the old as well as for the young?

There are but few in these days that die right. The priests know about this more than we do, but they don't like to be talking of *them* because they might be too big in our minds.

They are just the same in America as they are here, and my sister that came home told me they were, and the women that do cures, just like the woman at Clifden, or that woman you know of.

There was one she went to out there, and when you'd come in to ask a cure she'd be lulled into a sleep, and when she woke she'd give the cure. *Away* she was while the sleep lasted.

The Spinning Woman:

No, I never seen them myself, and I born and bred in the same village as Michael Barrett. But the old woman that lives with me, she does be telling me that before she came to this part she was going home one night, where she was tending a girl that was sick, and she had to cross a hill forth. And when she came to it, she saw a man on a white horse, and he got to the house before her, and the horse stopped at the back-door. And when she got there and went in, sure enough the girl was gone.

I never saw anything myself, but one night I was passing the boreen near Kinvara, and a tall man with a tall hat and a long coat came out of it. He didn't follow me, but he looked at me for a while, and then he went away.

And one time I saw the leprechaun. It's when I was a young woman, and there was black frieze wanting at Ballylee, and in those days they all thought there could no black frieze be spun without sending for me. So I was coming home late in the evening, and there I saw him sitting by the side of the road, in a hollow between two ridges. He was very small, about the height of my knee, and

wearing a red jacket, and he went out of that so soon as he saw me. I knew nothing about him at that time. The boys say if I'd got a hold of his purse I'd be rich for ever. And they say he should have been making boots; but he was more in dread of me than I of him, and had his instruments gathered up and away with him in one second.

There used to be a lot of things seen, but someway the young people go abroad less at night, and I'm thinking the souls of some of *those* may be delivered by this time.

There was a boy looked out of the door, and he saw a woman milking the cow. But after, when he went to milk her, he found as much milk as ever there was.

Mrs. Phelan:

There was a woman at Kilbecanty was out one evening and she saw a woman dressed in white come after her, and when she looked again she had disappeared into a hole in the wall. Small she must have grown to get into that. And for eleven days after that, she saw the same appearance, and after eleven days she died.

There was another woman lived at Kilbecanty, just beside the churchyard, you can see the house yet. And one day she found a plate of food put in at the door, the best of food, meat and other

things. So she eat it and the next day the same thing happened. And she told a neighbouring woman about it, and she left her door open, and a plate of food was left in to her that night. But when she saw it she was afraid to eat it, but took it and threw it out. And the next day she died. But the woman that eat the food, nothing happened to her.

There was one Halloran took that farm on the road beyond one time, but he locked the house up, not meaning to go and live in it yet a while, and he kept the key in his pocket. But one night late he was coming by and he saw a light in the window and looked in, and he saw a woman sitting by a fire she was after lighting. So he ran away and never went to live in the house after.

One night myself coming back from Kelly's I saw a man by the side of the road, and I knew him to be one Cuniff that had died a year before.

There were two men stealing apples in a garden, and when they tried to get out there was a soldier at the door with a sword in his hand. And at the door there he was still before them; so they had to leave the two bags of apples behind.

W. Sullivan:

One night myself I was driving the jennet I had at that time to Cappagh and I went past a place one Halvey had bought and I saw a man having a white front to his shirt standing by the wall, and

I said to myself, "Halvey is minding this place well," and I went on, and I saw the man following me, and the jennet let a roar and kicked at me, and at that time we passed a stile, and I saw him no more.

Mrs. Barrett:

I don't know did old Michael see anything or was it in his head. But James, the brother that died, told me one time that he was crossing the way beyond from Brennan's, where the stones are. And there he saw a hurling going on. He never saw a field so full before. And he stood and watched them and wasn't a bit frightened, but the dog that was with him shrank between his legs and stopped there.

And my father told me that one time he was stopping with my uncle, up there near Mrs. Quaid's, in a house that's pulled down since. And he woke up and saw the night so bright that he went out. And there he saw a hurling going on, and they had boots like soldiers and were all shining with the brightness of the night.

And Micky Smith, God rest his soul, saw them at midday passing in the air above Cahir, as thick as birds.

A Gate-keeper:

Niland that met the coach that time and saw them other times, he told me that there were two

sets among them. The one handsome and tall and like the gentry; the others more like ourselves, he said, and short and wide, and the body starting out in front, and wide belts about their waists. Only the women he saw, and they were wearing white caps with borders, and their hair in curls over the forehead and check aprons and plaid shawls. They are the spiteful ones that would do you a mischief, and others that are like the gentry would do nothing but to laugh and criticize you.

One night myself I was outside Loughrea on the road, about 1 o'clock in the morning and the moon was shining. And I saw a lady, a true lady she was, dressed in a sort of a ball dress, white and short in the skirt, and off the shoulders. And she had long stockings and dancing shoes with short uppers. And she had a long thin face, and a cap on her head with frills, and every one of the frills was the breadth of my six fingers. As to flowers or such things, I didn't notice, for I was more fixed in looking at the cap. I suppose they wore them at balls in some ancient times. I followed her a bit, and then she crossed the road to Johnny Flanigan the joiner's house, that had a gate with piers. And I went across after her, to have a better view, and when she got to the pier she shrank into it and there was nothing left.

Johnny Kelly that lives in Loughrea was over here one evening, where he had some cattle on the land at Coole. And where the river goes away, he

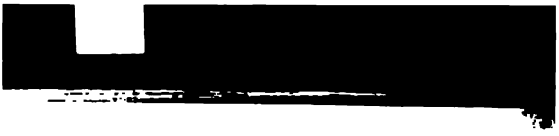
saw two ladies sitting, ladies he thought them to be, and they had long dresses. And they rose up and went on to that hole where the water is and the trees. And there all of a sudden they rose a storm and went up in it, with a sort of a roar or a cry and passed away through the air.

And I was in the house with my wife and I heard the cry, and I thought it might be some drunken man going home, and it about 10 o'clock in the evening. And I went to the door, and presently Kelly came in and you'd have thought him a drunken man, walking and shaking as he did with the fright he got seeing them going off away in the storm.

Mrs. Casey:

I went over to see Kate Cloran the other day, knowing that she had seen some of these things. And she told me that she was led astray by them one time—a great lot of them, they were dressed in white blouses and black skirts and some of them had crimson mantles, but none of them had any covering on their head, and they had all golden hair and were more beautiful than any one she had ever seen.

And one night she met the coach and four, and it was full of ladies, letting the window up and down and laughing out at her. They had golden hair, or it looked so with the lights. They were dressed in white, and there were bunches of flowers about the horses' heads. Roses, chiefly,



some pink and some blue. The coachmen were strange looking, you could not say if they were men or women—and their clothes were more like country clothes. They kept their heads down that she could not see their faces, but those in the carriage had long faces, and thin, and long noses.

Mike Martin:

They are of the same size as we are. People only call them diminutive because they are made so when they're sent on certain errands.

There was a man of Ardrahan used to see many things. But he lost his eyesight after. It often happens that those that see these things lose their earthly sight.

The coach and four is seen by many. It appears in different forms, but there is always the same woman in it. Handsome I believe she is, and white; and there she will always be seen till the end of the world.

It's best to be neighbourly with them anyway—best to be neighbourly.

There was a woman woke one night and she saw two women by the fire, and they came over and tried to take away her baby. But she held him and she nudged her husband with her arm, but he was fast asleep. And they tried him again, and all she could do wouldn't waken the husband, but still she had the baby tight, and she called out a curse in the devil's name. So then they went away, for they don't like cursing.

One night coming home from Madden's where I was making frames with him, I began to tremble and to shake, but I could see nothing. And at night there came a knocking at the window, and the dog I had that would fight any dog in Ireland began to shrink to the wall and wouldn't come out. And I looked out the door and saw him. Little clothes he had on, but on his head a quarter cap, and a sort of a bawneen about him. And I would have followed him, but the rest wouldn't let me.

Another time I was crossing over the stile behind Kiltartan chapel into Coole, and others along with me. And a great blast of wind came, and two trees were bent and broken and fell into the river, and the splash of water out of it went up to the skies. And those that were with me saw many figures, but myself I only saw one, sitting there by the bank where the trees fell, dark clothes he had, and he was headless.

They can take all shapes and it's said a pig is the worst, but I believe if you take no notice of them and bless yourself as they pass, they'll do you no harm at all.

There were two men walking by a forth that's beyond Cloon, and one of them must have been in it at some time, for he told the other to look through his arm, and when he looked he could see thousands of people about walking and driving, and ladies and gentry among them.

There was a man in Cloon and he was very religious and very devout and he didn't believe in anything. But one day he was at the Punch-bowl out on the Ennis road, and there he saw two coaches coming through the thick wood and they full of people and of ladies, and they went in to the bushes on the other side. And since he saw that he'd swear to *them* being there.

There was a woman living over near Tirneevan, and one morning three men came galloping up on three horses, and they stopped at the door and tied up the horses and walked in, and they strangers. And the woman put the tongs over the cradle where the baby was sleeping, for that is a *pishogue*. And when they saw the tongs, they looked at one another and laughed, but they did him no harm, but pulled out the table and sat down and played cards for a while, and went away again.

But if they're well treated, and if you know how to humour them, they're the best of neighbours.

There was a woman seen not long ago, all in white, and she standing in a stream washing her feet. But you need never be afraid of anything that's white.

There was a woman I know was away sometimes and used to go into a forth among them. She told

me about it, and she said there were big and small among them as there are here. And they wore caps like hurling caps, all striped with blue and different colours, and their dress striped the same way.

A Seaside Man:

There was a girl below in Spiddal was coming home from Galway with her father, and just at the bridge below she saw the coach and four. Like a van it was, with horses, and full of gentlemen. And she tried to make her father see it, and he couldn't. And it passed along the road, and then turned down into a field, over the stones, and it got to the strand and ran along it for a while, and what became of it then I don't know. My father told me that one night he came from a wake, and in the field beyond, that was all a flag then, but the man that owns it has it covered with earth now, he saw about twelve ladies all in white, and they dancing round and round and a fiddler or a flute-player or whatever he was, in the middle. And he thought they were some ladies from Spiddal, and called out to them that it was late to be out dancing. And he turned to open the door of the house, and while he was turning they were gone.

There was a man walking one night and he felt a woman come and walk behind him, and she all in white. And the two of them walked on till sunrise, and then a cock crowed, and the man said,

"There's the cock crowing." And she said, "That's only a weak cock of the summer." And soon after another cock crowed, and he asked did she hear it, and she said, "That's but a poor cock of the harvest." And the third time a cock crowed and when the man asked her she said, "That's a cock of March. And you're as wise as the man that doesn't tell Friday's dream on Saturday." For if you dream on a Friday, you must never tell the dream of a Saturday.

Mrs. Swift:

My mother told me, and she wouldn't tell a lie, that one time she went to a wake at Ardrahan. And about 12 o'clock, the night being hot, she and her sister went out to the back of the house. And there they saw a lot of people running as hard as they could to the house, and knocking down the walls as they came to them, for there were a lot of small stones. And she said to her sister, "These must be all the first cousins coming, and there won't be room to sit in the house when they come in." So they hurried back. But no one ever came in or came to the door at all.

They are said to be outside the door there often. And some see them hurling, small they are then, and with grey coats and blue caps. And the car-driver told me—he wouldn't tell a lie—that he often passed them walking like soldiers through the hollow beyond.

An Old Man on Slieve Echtge:

One night I was walking on that mountain beyond, and a little lad with me, Martin Lehane, and we came in sight of the lake of Dairecaol. And in the middle of the lake I saw what was like the shadow of a tall fir tree, and while I was looking it grew to be like the mast of a boat. And then ropes and rigging came at the sides and I saw that it was a ship; and the boy that was with me, he began to laugh. Then I could see another boat, and then more and more till the lake was covered with them, and they moving from one side to another. So we watched for a while, and then we went away and left them there.

Mrs. Guinan:

It's only a few days ago, I was coming through the field between this and the boreen, and I saw a man standing, a countryman you'd say he was. And when I got near him, all at once he was gone, and when I told Mrs. Raftery in the next house, she said she didn't wonder at that, for it's not very long ago she saw what seemed to be the same man, and he vanished in the same way.

There's a woman living up that road beyond, is married to a man of the Matthews, and last year she told me that a strange woman came into her house, and asked had she good potatoes. And she said she had. And the woman said: "You have them this year, but we'll have

them next year." And she said: "When you go out of the house, it's your enemy you'll see standing outside," that was her near neighbour and was her worst enemy.

They'll often come in the night, and bring away the food. I wouldn't touch any food that had been lying about in the night, you wouldn't know what might have happened it. And my mother often told me, best not eat it, for the food that's cooked at night and left till the morning, they will have left none of the strength in it.

There was a hurling seen in a field near our house, little men they were in green with red caps, and a sergeant of police and his men that were going by stopped to look at them, but Johnny Roland a boy I know, was standing in the middle of them all the time in the field, and never saw anything at all.

A North Galway Woman:

There was a man living over at Caramina, beyond Moyne, Dick Regan was his name, and one night he was walking over a little hill near that place. And when he got to the top of it, he found it like a fair green with all the people that were in it, and they buying and selling just like ourselves. And they did him no harm, but they put a basket of cakes into his hand and kept him selling them all the night. And when he got home, he told the

story. And the neighbours when they heard it gave him the name of the cakes and to the day of his death he was called nothing but Richard Crackers.

There was a smith, and a man called on him late one evening, and asked him to shoe a horse for him and so he did. And then he offered him pay but he would take none. And the man took him out behind the house, and there were three hundred horses with riders on them, and a hundred without, and he said, "We want riders for those," and they went on.

An Aran Man:

A man that came over here from Connemara named Costello told me that one night he was making poteen, and a man on a white horse came up, and the horse put his head into the place they were making it, and then they rode away again. So he put a bottle of the whiskey outside the place, and in a little time he went and looked and it was empty. And then he put another bottle out, and in a little time he looked again, and it was empty. And then he put a third, but when he looked the whiskey in it had not been stirred. And he told me he never did so much with it or made so much profit as he did in that year.

They are everywhere. Tom Deruane saw them down under the rocks hurling and they were all

wearing black caps. And sometimes you'd see them coming on the sea, just like a barrel on the top of the water, and when they'd get near you, no matter how calm the day, you'd have a hurricane about you. That is when they are taking their diversions. And one evening late I was down with the wife burning kelp on the rocks, where we had a little kiln made. And we heard a talking and a whispering about us on the rocks, and my wife thought it was the child that the sister was bringing down to her, and she said, "God bless the son!" but no one came, and the talking went on again, and she got uneasy, and at last we left the kelp and came home; and we weren't the first that had to leave it for what they heard in that place.

Fallen angels they are said to be. God threw a third part of them into Hell with Lucifer, and it was Michael that interceded for the rest, and then a third part was cast into the air and a third on the land and the sea. And here they are all about us as thick as grass.

A Needlewoman from North Galway Working at Coole:

Myself and Anne (one of the maids) went up the middle avenue after dark last night and we got a fright, seeing what we thought to be faeries. They were men dressed in black clothes like evening clothes, wearing white ruffles round their necks and high black hats without brims. Two walked in front and one behind, and they seemed to walk or

march stiff like as if there was no bend in the leg. They held something in each hand and they stopped before the gate pier where there is a sort of cross in white like paint, then they disappeared and we turned and ran.

(*When they were going up to bed, I am told, "Anne suddenly stopped under the picture of Mary Queen of Scots and called out, 'That is like the frill they wore' and sank down on the stairs in a kind of faint.*")

One time at home I was out about dusk, and presently I heard a creaking, and a priest walked by reading his prayers. But when he came close I saw it was Father Ryan that was dead some time before. And I ran in and told a woman, who used to help in milking, what I had seen, and she said, "If it's Father Ryan you saw I don't wonder, for I saw him myself at the back of the door there only a week ago."

There was a boy was making a wall near Cruachmaa and a lot of *them* came and helped him, and he saw many neighbours that were dead among them. And when they had the wall near built another troop of them came running and knocked it down. And the boy died not long after.

A Young Man:

My father told me that he was down one time at the north shore gathering wrack, and he saw a

man before him that was gathering wrack too and stooping down. He had a black waistcoat on him and the rest of his clothes were flannel just like the people of this island. And when my father drew near him, he stooped himself down behind a stone; and when he looked there, there was no sight or mind of him.

One time myself when I was a little chap, about the size of Michael there, I was out in the fields, and I saw a woman standing on the top of a wall, and she having a child in her hand. She had a long black coat about her. And then she got down and crossed over the field, and it seemed to me all the time that she was only about so high (three feet) and that there was only about two feet between her and the ground as she walked, and the child always along with her. And then she passed over another wall and was gone.

The Spinning Woman:

There was a new-married woman, and the husband was going out and he gave her wool to spin and to have ready for him. And she couldn't know what in the world to do, for she never learned to spin. And she was there sitting at it and a little man came in, and when she told him about it he said he'd bring it away and spin it for her and bring it back again. And she asked for his name, but he wouldn't tell that. And soon after there was a ragman going the 'road and he saw a hole and he looked down and there he saw

the little man, and he stirring a pot of stirabout with one hand and spinning with the other hand, and he was singing while he stirred: —— is my name (that's his name in Irish but I won't tell you the meaning of it) and she doesn't know it, and so I'll bring her along with me." So the ragman went in and came to the young woman's house, and told her what the man was singing. So when he came with the wool she called him by his name, and he threw the wool down and went away; for he had no power over her when she knew his name.

Mary Glynn of Slieve Echtge:

That's it, that's it, *the other class* of people don't like us to be going out late, we might be in their way, unless it's for a case, or a thing that can't be helped. And this is Monday, no, Mrs. Deruane, not Tuesday—we'll say it's Monday. It's at night they're seen, God bless them, and their music is heard, God bless them, the finest music you ever heard, like all the fifers of the world and all the instruments, and all the tunes of the world. There was one of those boys that go about from house to house on the morning of the new year, to get a bit of bread or a cup of tea or anything you'll have ready for him, and he told us that he was coming down the hill near us, and he had the full of his arm of bits of bread, and he heard the music, for it was but dawn, and he was frightened and ran and lost the bread. I heard it sometimes myself and there's no mus-

in the world like it, but it's not all can hear it. Round the hill it comes, and you going in at the door. And they are quiet neighbours if you treat them well. God bless them and bring them all to heaven!

For they were in heaven once, and heaven was the first place there was war, and they were all to be done away with, and it was St. Peter asked the Saviour to help them. So he turned His hand like this, and the sky and the earth were full of them, and they are in every place, and you know that better than I do because you read books.

Mary Glynn and Mary Irwin:

One night there were bonavs in the house,—God bless the hearers and the place it's told in—God bless all we see and those we don't see!—And there was a man coming to rise dung in the potato field in the morning, and so, late at night, Mary Glynn was making stirabout and a cake to have ready for breakfast.

Mary Irwin's brother was asleep within on the bed. And there came the sound of the grandest music you ever heard from beyond the stream, and it stopped here. And Micky awoke in the bed, and was afraid and said, "Shut up the door and quench the light," and so we did. It's likely they wanted to come into the house, and they wouldn't when they saw us up and the lights about. But one time when there were potatoes in the loft, Mary Irwin and her brothers

were well pelted with them when they sat down to their supper. And Mary Glynn got a blow on the side of her face from them one night in the bed. And they have the hope of Heaven, and God grant it to them. And one day there was a priest and his servant riding along the road, and there was a hurling of *them* going on in the field. And a man of them came and stood on the road and said to the priest, "Tell me this, for you know it, have we a chance of Heaven?" "You have not," said the priest (*"God forgive him," says Mary Glynn—"a priest to say that"*); and the man that was of them said, "Put your fingers in your ears till you have travelled two miles of the road; for when I go back and tell what you are after telling me to the rest, the crying and the bawling and the roaring will be so great that if you hear it you'll never hear a noise again in this world." So they put their fingers then in their ears, but after a while the servant said to the priest, "Let me take out my fingers now." And the priest said, "Do not." And then the servant said again, "I think I might take one finger out." And the priest said, "As you are so persevering you may take it out." So he did, and the noise of the crying and the roaring and the bawling was so great that he never had the use of that ear again.

Callan of Slieve Echtge:

We know they are in it, for Father Hobbs that was our parish priest saw them himself one time

"There's the cock crowing." And she said, "That's only a weak cock of the summer." And soon after another cock crowed, and he asked did she hear it, and she said, "That's but a poor cock of the harvest." And the third time a cock crowed and when the man asked her she said, "That's a cock of March. And you're as wise as the man that doesn't tell Friday's dream on Saturday." For if you dream on a Friday, you must never tell the dream of a Saturday.

Mrs. Swift:

My mother told me, and she wouldn't tell a lie, that one time she went to a wake at Ardrahan. And about 12 o'clock, the night being hot, she and her sister went out to the back of the house. And there they saw a lot of people running as hard as they could to the house, and knocking down the walls as they came to them, for there were a lot of small stones. And she said to her sister, "These must be all the first cousins coming, and there won't be room to sit in the house when they come in." So they hurried back. But no one ever came in or came to the door at all.

They are said to be outside the door there often. And some see them hurling, small they are then, and with grey coats and blue caps. And the car-driver told me—he wouldn't tell a lie—that he often passed them walking like soldiers through the hollow beyond.

An Old Man on Slieve Echtge:

One night I was walking on that mountain beyond, and a little lad with me, Martin Lehane, and we came in sight of the lake of Dairecaol. And in the middle of the lake I saw what was like the shadow of a tall fir tree, and while I was looking it grew to be like the mast of a boat. And then ropes and rigging came at the sides and I saw that it was a ship; and the boy that was with me, he began to laugh. Then I could see another boat, and then more and more till the lake was covered with them, and they moving from one side to another. So we watched for a while, and then we went away and left them there.

Mrs. Guinan:

It's only a few days ago, I was coming through the field between this and the boreen, and I saw a man standing, a countryman you'd say he was. And when I got near him, all at once he was gone, and when I told Mrs. Raftery in the next house, she said she didn't wonder at that, for it's not very long ago she saw what seemed to be the same man, and he vanished in the same way.

There's a woman living up that road beyond, is married to a man of the Matthews, and last year she told me that a strange woman came into her house, and asked had she good potatoes. And she said she had. And the woman said: "You have them this year, but we'll have

she was, and she had a good suit of clothes. And I bid her rest herself and I'd give her a cup of tea, and she said, "I travelled far today and you're the first that offered me that." And when she had it taken she said, "If I had a bit of tobacco, and a bit of bacon for my dinner, I'd be all right." And I made a sign to the woman I have, under the table, to give her a bit of tobacco. So she got it for her and she said, "I shouldn't take it, and this the second time today you divided it." And that was true, for a neighbouring boy had come in in the morning and asked for a loan of a bit, and she had cut it for him. And I said, "Go to that house beyond and the woman will give you a bit of bacon"; and she said, "I won't go to that woman, for it was she told you that one of the neighbours was bringing away her butter from her," and so she had, sure enough. And then she said, she must be in Cruachmaa that night, and she went away and I never saw her again.

A Mayo Man:

One time I was working in England near Warrington, and I was walking the road alone at night, and I saw a woman under an umbrella in the mist and I said, "Is it a living thing you are or dead?" And she vanished on the minute. And I sat down by the hedge for a while, and I heard feet walking, walking, up and down inside the hedge, and I am sure they were the same thing. And then two strange men passed me, dressed in working clothes,

but talking gibberish that I could not understand, and I know that they were no right men. So I went in towards the town and I met a policeman, and he took up his lamp and made it shine in my face, for they carry a lamp in their belt and they will take the measurement of your face with it, the same as by daylight. And he said, "There never was a worse road for an Irishman to walk than this one." It was maybe because of the land and the rough people of it he said that.

A Gate-keeper:

My sister and her husband were driving on the Kinvara road one day, and they saw a carriage coming behind them, and it with bright lamps about it. And they drew the car to one side to let it pass. And when it passed they saw it had no horses, and the men that were sitting up where the drivers should be were headless.

There's many has seen the coach, in different shapes, and some have seen the riders going over the country. Drumconnor is a great place for these things. The Sheehans that lived in the castle had no peace or rest. Mrs. Sheehan looked up one day she was outside, and there was some person standing at the window, and in a moment it was headless. And they'd see them coming in at the gate, sometimes in the shape of a woman, and a sort of a cape in the old fashion and a handkerchief over the head, and sometimes in the shape of a cow or such things. And noises they'd hear, and things

being thrown about in the house and packs of wool thrown down the stairs.

And they had a good many children, and all the best and the best-looking were taken. And at last they got the owner to build them a house outside, and since that they have no trouble and have lost no more children.

Mrs. Madden:

Rivers of Cloonmore one time when he was going to Loughrea, at the fish-pond corner saw the coach. I didn't see it, but I saw him draw aside and say to Leary not to let on they saw it.

Meagher another time saw it, and it full of children all in white.

But Egan beyond, he'd never let on to believe in such things and would make them out to be nothing—he has such a gift of talking.

And one time in the night I and my husband woke and heard the car rattling by, and we thought it was St. George going to Ballylee Castle, till we asked in the morning. Four horses it has and they headless, and sure and certain we heard it pass that night.

Mrs. Casey:

And I knew a boy met the coach and four one time. Drawn by four horses it was, and lights about it and music, and the horses dressed with flowers. And in it were sitting ladies, very clever-looking and wild, and their hair twisted up on their

heads, and when they went on a little way they called to some man on the road to come with them, and he refused, and they laughed at that and ridiculed him.

I never saw the coach and four with these two eyes; but one time I heard it pass by, about 11 o'clock at night, when I was sitting up mending the sole of a boot. Surely it passed by, but I would not look out to see what it was like.

For there was a woman I knew was walking with a man one night from Kilcolgan to Oranmore. And as they were sitting by the roadside they heard the coach and four coming. And the man stood up and looked at it, but he had no right to do that, he should have turned his head away. And there were grand people in it, ladies, and flowers about them. But no sooner did he look at it than he was struck blind and never had his eyesight since.

It's best not to look at them if they pass. And when you go along the road and a storm comes in the calm and raises all the dust of the road up in the air, turn your head another way, for it's they that are passing. In the month of May is the most time they do be travelling. And it's best not to go near water then, near a river or a lake.

When my father was dying my mother was sitting with him, and she heard a car pass the door, going light and quick, but when it passed down the road again it went heavy, and that was the coach and four.

There was Sully had the forge one time, and passing one night down the road towards Nolan's gate, he saw a brake pass full of ladies and gentlemen, as he thought, and he believed it to be St. George's carriage. But at Nolan's gate, it turned and came up again, and whatever he saw, when he got home he took to his bed for some days with the fright he got.

Kelly told me one time he saw the coach and four driving through the field above Dillon's, with four horses. And wasn't that a strange place for it to be driving through all the rocks?

There was boys used to be stealing apples from the orchard at Tyrone, and something in white with a candle used to come after them, and then change to something in red. So they went to a forth, and they went to the side of it where the sun rises and there they made the mark of the cross, but after all they had to leave going after the apples.

There was a woman down at Silver's the other night, and when I was standing to go home she said, "I wonder you not to be afraid to go through these fields." So I asked her did ever she see anything, and she said, "I was with another girl one day near Inchy gate, and we heard a voice, and we saw the coach and four coming and we were afraid, and we went in under the bushes to hide ourselves. It passed by us then, it was big

and long, longer than a carriage you could see now, and there were people in it, men and women dressed in all colours, blue and red and pink and black, but I could not say what had they on their heads. And there was a man on the box, not a coachman but just a Christian, and he driving the four horses.

"As to the horses, the two that were in front were grey, but the two that were near the carriage were brown; it gave me a great fright at the time."

There is no light about it in the daytime, but at night it is all shining.

There was a girl saw it one time in the same way, drawn by horses that were without heads. She got a great fright and she ran home. And in the morning when she got up, she that had been a dark-haired girl was as white as snow, and her hair grey. She is living yet and is up to nearly a hundred years.

Mrs. Roche:

My father would never believe in anything till one time he was walking near Seanmor with another smith, and he stopped and said "I can't go on with all the people that's in that field." And my father said "I don't see any people." And the other said "Put your right foot on my right foot, and your hand on my right shoulder." And he did, and he saw a great many in the field,

but not so many as the other saw; fine men and all dressed in white shirts, shining they were so white. He told us about it when he came home, and he said he wished he didn't see them. He was dead within the twelvemonth, and the man that was with him was dead before that, not much time between them.

VIII

BUTTER

VIII

BUTTER

I have been told:

Butter, that's a thing that's very much meddled with. On the first of May before sunrise it's very apt to be all taken away out of the milk. And if ever you lend your churn or your dishes to your neighbour, she'll be able to wish away your butter after that. There was a woman used to lend a drop of milk to the woman that lived next door, and one day she was churning, churning, and no butter came. And at last some person came into the house and said, "It's hard for you to have butter here, and if you want to know where it is, look into the next house." So she went in and there was her neighbour letting on to be churning in a quart bottle, and rolls of butter beside her. So she made as if to choke her, and the woman run out into the garden and picked some mullein leaves, and said, "Put these leaves in under your churn, and you'll find your butter come back again." And so she did. And she found it all in the churn after.

To sprinkle a few drops of holy water about the churn, and to put a coal of fire under it, that you should always do—as was always done in the old time—and the *others* will never touch it.

There was a woman in the town was churning, and when the butter came she went out of the house to bring some water for to wash it and to make it up. And there was a tailor sitting sewing on the table. And the woman from next door came in and asked the loan of a coal of fire, and that's a thing that's never refused from one poor person to another in the morning. So he bid her take it. And presently she came in again and said that the coal of fire had gone out, and asked another, and this she did the third time. But the tailor knew well what she was doing, and that every coal of fire she brought away, there was a roll of butter out of the churn went with it. So whatever prayers he said is not known, but he brought the butter all back again, and into a can on the floor, and no hands ever touched it. So when the woman of the house came back, "There's your butter in the can," said he. And she wondered how it came out of the churn to be in three rolls in the can. And then he told her all that had happened.

There was a man was churning, churning, every day and no butter would come only froth. So some wise woman told him to go before sunrise to a

running stream and bring a bottle of the water from it. And so he did before sunrise, and had to go near four miles to it. And from that day he had rolls and rolls of butter coming every time he churned.

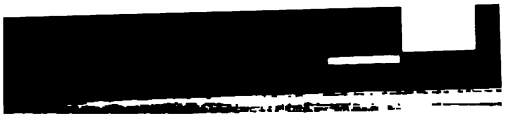
There was one Burke, he knew how to bring it back out of some old Irish book that has disappeared since he died. There was a woman a herd's wife lived beyond, and one time Burke had his own butter taken, and he said he knew a way to find who had done it, and he brought in the coulter of the plough and put it in the fire. And when it began to get red hot, this woman came running, and fell on her knees, for it was she did it. And after that he never lost his butter again. But she took to her bed and was there for years until her death. And she couldn't turn from one side to another without some person to lift her. Her son is now living in Dublin, and is the President of some Association.

If a woman in Aran is milking a cow and the milk is spilled, she says, "There's some are the better for it," and I think it a very nice thought, that they don't grudge it if there is any one it does good to.

There was a man, one Finnegan, had the knowledge how to bring it back. And one time Lanigan that lives below at Kilgarvan had all his butter

taken and the milk nothing but froth rising to the top of the pail like barm. So he went to Finnegan and he bid him get the coulter of the plough, and a shoe of the wickedest horse that could be found and some other thing, I forget what. So he brought in the coulter of the plough, and his brother-in-law chanced to have a horse that was so wicked it took three men to hold him, and no one could get on his back. So he got a shoe off of him. But just at that time, Lanigan's wife went to confession, and what did she do but to tell the priest what they were doing to get back the butter. So the priest was mad with them, and bid them to leave such things alone. And when Finnegan heard it he said, "What call had she to go and confess that? Let her get back her own butter for herself any more, for I'll do nothing to help her."

Grass makes a difference? So it may, but believe me that's not all. I've been myself in the County Limerick, where the grass is that rich you could grease your boots in it, and I heard them say there, one quart of cream ought to bring one pound of butter. And it never does. *And where does the rest go to?*



IX

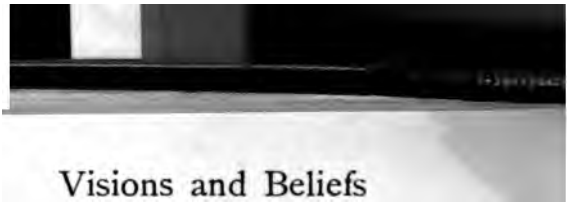
THE FOOL OF THE FORTH

IX

THE FOOL OF THE FORTH

WE had, before our quest began, heard of faeries and banshees and the walking dead; but neither Mr. Yeats in Sligo nor I in Galway had ever heard of "the worst of them all," the Fool of the Forth, the Amadán-na-Briona, he whose stroke is, as death, incurable. As to the fool in this world, the pity for him is mingled with some awe, for who knows what windows may have been opened to those who are under the moon's spell, who do not give in to our limitations, are not "bound by reason to the wheel." It is so in the East also, and I remember the surprise of the European doctor who had charge of an hospital in one of the Native States of India, because when the ruler of the State came one day to visit it, he and his high officials, while generous and pitiful to the bodily sick, bowed down and saluted a young lad who had lost his wits, as if recognizing an emissary from a greater kingdom.

In one of my little comedies "The Full Moon," the cracked woman comforts her half-witted brother, saying of his commonsense critics, "It is as dull as themselves you would be maybe, and the world to be



different and the moon to change its courses with the sun." Those commonsense people of Cloon describe a fool as "one that is laughing and mocking, and that would not have the same habits as yourself, or to have no fear of things you would be in dread of, or to be using a different class of food." May it not be the old story of the deaf man thinking all his fellow guests had suddenly lost their reason when they began to dance, and he alone could not hear the call of the pipes?

There is perhaps sometimes a confusion in the mind between things seen and unseen, for an old woman telling me she had often heard of the Amadán-na-Briona went on "And I knew one too, and he's not dead a twelvemonth. It's at night he used to be away with them, and they used to try to bring people away into the forth where he was.

"Was he a fool in this world too? Well, he was mostly, and I think I know another that's living now."

I was told by:

A Woman Bringing Oysters from the Strand:

There was a boy, one Rivers, got the touch last June, from the Amadán-na-Briona, the Fool of the Forth, and for that touch there is no cure. It came to the house in the night-time and knocked at the door, and he was in bed and he did not rise to let it in. And it knocked the second time, and even then, if he had answered it, he might have escaped. But when it knocked the third time he fell back on the bed, and one side of him as if dead, and his jaw fell on the pillow.

He knew it was the Amadán-na-Briona did it, but he did not see him—he only felt him. And he used to be running in every place after that and trying to drown himself, and he was in great dread his father would say he was mad, and bring him away to Ballinasloe. He used to be asking me could his father do that to him. He was brought to Ballinasloe after and he died there, and his body was brought back and buried at Drumacoo.

Mrs. Murphy:

Cnoc-na-Briona is full of them, near Cappard. The Amadán-na-Briona is the master of them all, I heard the priest say that.

There was a man of the MacNeills passing by it one night coming back from the bog, and they brought him in, and when he came out next day —God save the mark—his face was turned to his poll. They sent then to Father Jordan, and he turned it right again. The man said they beat him while he was with them, and he saw there a great many of his friends that were dead.

The Spinning Woman:

There are fools among them, and the fools we see like that Amadán at Ballymore go away with them at night. And so do the women fools, that we call *lenshees*, that means, an ape.

It's true enough there is no cure for the stroke of the Amadán-na-Briona. There was an old man I knew long ago, he had a tape, and he could tell what disease you had with measuring you, and he knew many things. And he said to me one time "What month of the year is the worst?" And I said, "The month of May, of course." "It is not," he said, "but the month of June, for that's the month that the Amadán gives his stroke." They say he looks like any other man, but he's *leathan*—wide—and not smart. I know a boy one time got a great fright, for a lamb looked over the wall at him, and it with a big beard on it, and he knew it was the Amadán, for it was the month of June. And they brought him to that man I was telling you about, that had the tape. And when he saw him he said "Send for the priest and get a Mass

said over him." And so they did, and what would you say but he's living yet, and has a family.

A Seaside Man:

The stroke of the Fool is what there is no cure for; any one that gets that is gone. The Amadán-na-Briona we call him. It's said they are mostly good neighbours. I suppose the reason of the Amadán being wicked is he not having his wits, he strikes out at all he meets.

A Clare Man:

They, the other sort of people, might be passing you close and they might touch you; but any one that gets the touch of the Amadán-na-Briona is done for. And it's true enough that it's in the month of June he's most likely to give the touch. I knew one that got it, and told me about it himself.

He was a boy I knew well, and he told me that one night a gentleman came to him, that had been his landlord, and that was dead. And he told him to come along with him, for he wanted to fight another man. And when he went he found two great troops of them, and the other troop had a living man with them too, and he was put to fight him. And they had a great fight and at last he got the better of the other man, and then the troop on his side gave a great shout, and he was left home again.

But about three years after that he was cutting bushes in a wood, and he saw the Amadán coming at him. He had a big vessel in his arms, and it shining, so that the boy could see nothing else, but he put it behind his back then, and came running; and he said he looked wide and wild, like the side of a hill.

And the boy ran, and the Amadán threw the vessel after him, and it broke with a great noise, and whatever came out of it, his head was gone then and there. He lived for a while after and used to be telling us many things, but his wits were gone. He thought they mightn't have liked him to beat the other man, and he used to be afraid something would come on him.

Mrs. Staunton:

A friend of mine saw the Amadán one time in Poul-na-shionac, low-sized and very wide, and with a big hat on him, very high, and he'd make shoes for you if you could get a hold of him. But there are some say "No, that is not the Amadán-na-Briona, that is the leprechaun."

An Old Woman:

The Amadán-na-Briona is a bad one to meet. If you don't say, "The Lord be between us and harm," when you meet him, you are gone for ever and always. What does he look like? I suppose like any fool in a house—a sort of a clown.

A Man near Athenry:

Biddy Early could cure nearly all things, but she said that the only thing that she could do no cure for was the touch of the Amadán.

Another:

Biddy Early couldn't do nothing for the touch of the Amadán, because its power was greater than hers.

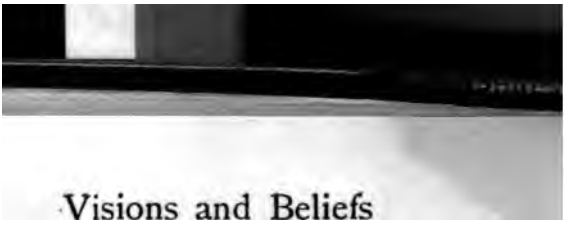
In the Workhouse:

The Amadán-na-Briona, he changes his shape every two days. Sometimes he comes like a youngster, and then he'll come like the worst of beasts. Trying to give the touch he used to be. I heard it said of late that he was shot, but I think myself it would be hard to shoot him.

Ned Meehan of Killinane:

The Amadán is the worst; I saw him myself one time, and I'd be swept if I didn't make away on the moment. It was on a race-course at Ballybrit, and no one there but myself, and I sitting with my back to the wall and smoking my pipe. And all at once the Amadán was all around me, in every place, and I ran and got out of the field or I'd be swept. And I saw others of them in the field; it was full of them, red scarfs they had on them.

I came home as quick as I could, and I didn't get over the fright for a long time, but there he was all about me.



Meehan's wife says: I remember you well coming in that night, and you trembling with the fright you got. And you told me the appearance he had, like a jockey he was, on a grey horse.

"That is true indeed," *says Ned, and he goes on:*

And one night I was up in that field beyond, watching sheep that were near their time to drop, and I saw a light moving through the fields beside me, and down the road and no one with it. It stopped for a while where the water is and went on again.

And there was a woman in Ballygra the same night heard the coach-a-baur passing, and she not hearing at all about the lights I saw.

A Man at Kilcolgan:

Father Callaghan that used to be in Esker was able to do great cures; he could cure even a man that had met the Amadán-na-Briona. But to meet the Amadán is to be in prison for ever.

X

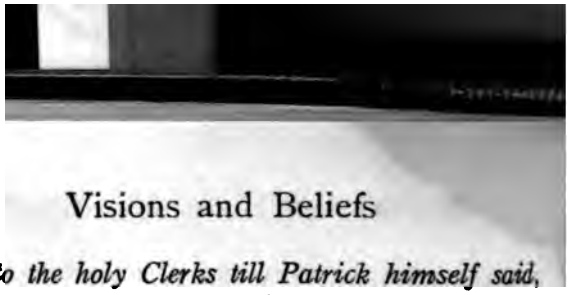
FORTHS AND SHEOGUEY PLACES

X

FORTHS AND SHEOGUEY PLACES

WHEN as children we ran up and down the green entrenchments of the big round raths, the lisses or forths, of Esserkelly or Moneen, we knew they had been made at one time for defence, and that is perhaps as much as is certainly known. Those at my old home have never been opened, but in some of their like I have gone down steps to small stone-built chambers that look too low for the habitation of any living race.

Had we asked questions of the boys who led our donkeys they would in all likelihood have given us, from tradition or vision, news of the shadowy inhabitants, the Sidhe, whose name in the Irish is all one with a blast of wind, and of the treasures they guard. And the old writings tell us that when blessed Patrick of the Bells walked Ireland, he did not refuse the promise of heaven to some among those spirits in prison, the old divine race for whom Mannanan himself had chosen these hidden dwellings, after the great defeat in battle by the human invaders, the Gaels, or to some they had brought among them from the face of the green earth. It was one of their musicians who



played to the holy Clerks till Patrick himself said, "But for some tang of the music of the Sidhe that is in it, I never heard anything nearer to the music of heaven." That music is heard yet from time to time; and it was into one of those hill dwellings that the father of McDonough the Galway piper, my friend, was taken till the Sidhe had taught him all their wild tunes and so bewitched his pipes that they would play of themselves if he threw them up among the rafters. There were great treasures there also in Saint Patrick's time, golden vats and horns, and crystal cups, and silks of the colour of the foxglove. It may be of these treasures that so many dreams are told.

As to the women of the Sidhe, some who have seen them, as old Mrs. Sheridan, tell of their white skin and yellow hair, for age has not come on them through the centuries. When one of them came claiming the fulfilment of an old promise from Caoilte of the Fianna, Patrick wondered at her young beauty, while the man who had been her lover was withered and bent and grey. But Caoilte said that was no wonder "for she is of the Tuatha de Danaan who are unfading and whose life is lasting, while I am of the sons of Milesius who are perishable and fade away." Yet then as now, notwithstanding their beauty and grandeur, those swept away into the hill dwellings would rather have the world they know. One of Finn's men meeting a comely young man who had been his comrade but was now an inhabitant of one of those hidden houses, asked how he fared. And for all his fine clothing and his blue weapons and the hound he held in

a silver chain, the young man gave the names of three drudges "who had the worst life of any who were with the Fianna," and then he said, "I would rather be living their life than the life I am leading now."

The name of these tribes of the goddess Dana is often confused with that of the northern invaders who were afterwards a terror to Ireland. And so it was of those unearthly tribes an old basket-maker was thinking when he said, in telling of the defeat of the Irish under James, "The Danes were dancing in the raths around Aughrim the night after the battle. Their ancestors were driven out of Ireland before, and they were glad when they saw those that had put them out put out themselves, and everyone of them skivered."

Many of the stories I have gathered tell how those tribes still protect their own; and even today, March 21, 1916, I have read in the "Irish Times" that "a farmer who was summoned by a road contractor for having failed to cut a portion of a hedge on the roadside, told the magistrates at Granard Petty Sessions that he objected to cutting the hedge as it grew in a fort or rath. He however had no objection to the contractor's men cutting the hedge. The magistrates allowed the case to stand till the next Court."

As to Knockmaa, or Cruachmaa, or, as it is called today, Castle Hacket Hill, that overlooks Lough Corrib and the plain of Moytura, and that we see as a blue cloud from our roads, it was in Saint Patrick's time the habitation of Finnbarr a king among the Sidhe and his seventeen sons, and it is to this day spoken of as "a very Sheoguey place."

It was in these enchanted hills that the ale of Goibniu the Smith kept whoever tasted it from sickness and from death, and there is some memory of this in a story told me by an old farmer. "There was a man one time set out from Ireland to go to America or some place; a common man looking for work he was. And something happened to the ship on the way, and they had to put to land to mend it. And in the country where they landed he saw a forth, and he went into it, and there he saw the smallest people he ever saw, and they were the Danes that went out of Ireland; and it was foxes they had for dogs, and weasels were their cats.

"Then he went back to get into the ship, but it was gone away, and he left behind. So he went back into the forth, and a young man came to meet him, and he told him what had happened. And the young man said 'Come into the room within where my father is in the bed, for he is out of his health and you might be able to serve him.' So they went in and the father was lying in the bed, and when he heard it was a man from Ireland was in it he said, 'I will give you a great reward if you will go back and bring me a thing I want out of Castle Hacket Hill. For if I had what is there,' he said, 'I would be as young as my son.' So the man consented to go, and they got a sailing ship ready, and it is what the old man told him, to go back to Ireland. 'And buy a little pig in Galway,' he said, 'and bring it to the mouth of the forth of Castle Hacket and roast it there. And inside the forth is an enchanted cat that is

keeping guard there, and it will come out; and here is a shot-gun and some cross-money that will kill any faery or any enchanted thing. And within in the forth,' he said, 'you will find a bottle and a rack-comb, and bring them back here to me.'

"So the man did as he was told and he bought the pig and roasted it at the mouth of the forth, and out came the enchanted cat, and it having hair seven inches long. And he fired the cross-money out of the shot-gun, and the cat went away and he saw it no more. And he got the bottle and the rack-comb and brought them back to the old man. And he drank what was in the bottle and racked his hair with the rack, and he got young again, as young as his own son."

It may be some of those faery treasures are still given out; for of the family who have been for a good while owners of the hill, one at least had the gift of genius. And I remember being told in childhood, and I have never known if it were fact or folk-tale, that her mother having as a bride gone to listen to some debate or royal speech in the House of Lords at Westminster, the whole assembly had stood up in homage to her beauty.

I was told by a Miller:

It was the Danes built these forths. They were a fair-haired race, and they married with the Irish that were dark-haired, just like those linen weavers your own great-grandfather brought up from the North, the Hevenors and the Glosters and others, married with the Roman Catholics. There was a king of the Danes called Trevenher that had a daughter that was a great beauty. And she gave a feast, and the young men of the other race dressed like girls and came to it, and sat at it till midnight, and then they threw off the women's clothes and killed all the generals and the king himself. So the Danes were driven out, that's why we have the fires and the wisps on St. John's Eve. And as for Herself there, she wouldn't for all the world let St. Martin's Day pass without killing of cocks—one for the woman and another for the man.

As to the three lisses at Ryanrush, there must have been a great deal of fighting there in the old time. There are some bushes growing on them and no one, man or woman, will ever put a hand to cut them, no more than they would touch the little bush by the well beyond, that used to have lights shining out of it.

And if any one was to fall asleep within the liss himself, he would be taken away and the spirit of some old warrior would be put in his place, and it's he would know everything in the whole world. There's no doubt at all but that there's the same sort of things in other countries. Sure *these* can go through and appear in Australia in one minute. But you hear more about them in these parts, because the Irish do be more familiar in talking of them.

Enchanters and magicians they were in the old times, and could make the birds sing and the stones and the fishes speak.

It's in the forths they mostly live. The last priest that was here told us a lot about them, but he said not to be anyway afraid of them, for they are but poor souls doing their penance.

Mary Nagle:

That's a fine big liss at Ryanrush, and people say they hear things there, and sometimes a great light is seen—no wonder these things should be seen there, for it was a great place for fighting in the old centuries, and a great deal of bones have been turned up in the fields. There was an open passage I remember into the liss, and two girls got a candle one time and went in, but they saw nothing but the ashes of the fires the Danes used to make. The passage is closed up now I believe, with big stones no man could lift.

One time a woman from the North came to our house, and she said a great deal of people is kept below there in the lisses; she had been there herself, and in the night-time in one moment they'd all be away at Cruachmaa, wherever that may be, down in the North I believe. And she knew everything that was in the house, and told us about my sister being sick, and that there was a hurling going on, as there was that day at the Isabella wood in Coole. And all about Coole House she knew as if she spent her life in it. I'd have picked a lot of stories out of her but my mother got nervous when she heard the truth coming out, and bid me be quiet. She had a red petticoat on her, the same as any country woman, and she offered to cure me, for it was that time I was delicate and your ladyship sent me to the salt water, but she asked a shilling and my mother said she hadn't got it. "You have," says she, "and heavier metal than that you have in the house." So then my mother gave her the shilling, and she put it in the fire and melted it, and says she, "After two days you'll see your shilling again." But we never did. And the cure she left, I never took it; it's not safe, and the priests forbid us to take their cures—for it must surely be from the devil their knowledge comes. But no doubt at all she was one of the Ingentry, that can take the form of a woman by day and another form at night. After that she went to Mrs. Quaid's house and asked her for a bit of tobacco. "You'll get it again" she said, "and

more with it." And sure enough, that very day a bit of meat came into Mrs. Quaid's house. (*Note* 1.)

Maurteen Joyce:

There's a forth near Clough that wanders underneath, but a man couldn't get into it without he'd crawl on his hands and knees. Well, Kennedy's filly was brought in there, and lived there for five days without food but what she got from *them*, and no one knew where she was till a man passing by heard her neighing and then she was dug out.

There's a forth near our house, but it's not the good people that are in it, only the old inhabitants of Ireland shut up there below.

There are a few old forths about, some of them you mightn't notice unless you understood such things; but sometimes passing by you'd feel a cold wind blowing from them, would nearly rend you in two.

When I was a young chap myself I used to see a white woman walking about sometimes at midday—that's the worst hour there is—and she'd always go back into a forth, the forth of Cahir near Cloonmore, and disappear into it.

She was known to be a woman that had died nine years before; and she would sometimes come into the sister's house, and bid her keep it clean. But one time the sister's husband went to burn the

inside of the forth, and the next morning his barn where he had all the wheat of the harvest and near a ton of hay and two or three packs of wool, was found to be on fire. And his own little girl, about eight years of age, was in the barn, and a labouring man broke through and brought a wet cloth with him and threw it over her and carried her out. But she was as black as cinders and dead. Vexed they were at him burning the forth.

An Old Miller:

Did *they* get help to make those forths? You may know well that they did. There was an engineer here when that road was being made—a sort of an idolater or a foreigner he was—anyway he made it through the forth, and he didn't last long after. Those other engineers, Edgeworth and Hemans beyond at Ardrahan when the railway was made, I'm told they avoided such things.

A Slieve Echtge Man:

There were two brothers taken away sudden, two O'Briens. They were cutting heath one day and filling the cart with it, and a voice told them to leave off cutting the heath, but they went on, and a blow struck the cart on the axle. And soon after that one of the brothers sat down in his chair and died sudden. And the other was one day going to market, I was going to it that day myself, and he wasn't far beyond the white gate when the axle of the cart broke in that same place where it

had got the blow, and so he had to go home again, and near the river where they're cutting the larch he turned in to talk to a poor man that was cutting a tree, and the tree fell, and the top of it struck him and killed him. And it was last March that happened.

There was one Leary in Clough had the land taken that's near Newtown racecourse. And he was out there one day building a wall, and it was time for his dinner, but he had none brought with him. And a man came to him and said "Is it home you'll be going for your dinner?" And he said "It's not worth my while to go back to Clough, I'd have the day lost." And the man said, "Well, come in and eat a bit with me." And he brought him into a forth and there was everything that was grand, and the dinner they gave him of the best, so that he eat near two plates of it. And then he went out again to build the wall. And whether it was with lifting the heavy stones I don't know, but (with respects to you) when he was walking the road home he began to vomit, and what he vomited up was all green grass.

A Man on the Connemara Coast:

This is a faery stream we're passing; there were some used to see them by the side of it, and washing themselves in it. And there used to be heard a faery forge here every night, and the hammering of the iron could be heard, and the blast of the furnace.

There is a faery hill beyond there in the mountain, and some have seen fires in it all through the night. And one time the police were out there still-hunting, and the head of them, one Rogers, was in the middle of that place, and there he died, no one could say how, though some of his men were round about him.

That's a nice flat clean place that rock we're passing—that's the sort of place they'd be seen dancing or having their play.

A Piper:

I knew twin sons, Considines, and one was struck with madness in England, and one at home—Pat in England, Mike in Connacht—at the one time. Both were sent to Ballinasloe Asylum, and got well in eight months, and that was ten year ago, and one of them is married and rearing a family. The mother used to be doing cures with herbs; it is likely that is the reason but she gave it up after they were struck.

There were three of another family went in to the Asylum, one this year, one next year, and one the year after, and no reason but that their house was close to the side of a forth.

Maurteen Joyce:

When I was in Clare there was a forth, and two or three men went down it one time, and brought rushes and lights with them. And they came to where there was a woman washing at a river and

they heard the crying of young lambs, and it November, for when we have winter, there is summer there. So they got afraid, and two of the men came back, but one of them stopped there and was never heard of after. The best of things they have, and no trouble at all but to be eating; but they have no chance of being saved till the Day of Judgment.

I knew another forth that two men watched, and at night there came out of it two troops of horses, and they began to graze. But when the men came near them they made for the forths, and all they got was a foal. And they kept it, and it was a mare-horse, and it had foals, and the breed was the best that was ever seen in the country.

Mrs. Leary:

There did strange things happen in that wood, noises would be heard, and those that went in to steal rods could never get them up on their back to bring them away. But there was one man said whatever happened he'd bring them, and he got them on to his back, and then they were lifted off it over the wood. But they fell again and he got them and carried them away; I suppose they thought well of him having so much courage.

Cruachmaa is the great place for them.

A man who had lost a blood mare met an old man from a forth who said "Put your right foot on my right foot." And he did so, and at once he saw the blood mare and his foal close by.

The Old Man Who Is Making a Well:

There was a man and his wife was brought away at Cruachmaa and he was told to go dig, and he'd get her out. And he began to dig, and when he had a hole made at the side of the hill he saw her coming out, but he couldn't stop the pick that he had lifted for the stroke, and it went through her head.

J. Doran:

Whether they are in it or not, there are many tell stories of them. And I often saw the half of Cruachmaa covered—like as if there was a mist on it.

But one side of a wall is luckier than another, all the old people will tell you that. There was a big stone in the yard behind our house and my husband thought to blast it, for it was in the way, and my mother said "I'm in the house longer than you, and take my advice and never touch that stone," and he never did. But there was a man built a house close by and he wanted to close a passage, and one morning he came early and was laying hands on that stone to take it. But I was out when I heard him and drove him away. And the house never throve with him, he lost two or three children, and then he died himself.

A Gate-keeper:

At St. Patrick's well at Burren there used to be a great pattern every year. And every year there was something lost and killed at it, a horse or a man or a woman.

So at last the priest put a stop to it. And there was an old woman with me in the barracks at Burren, and she told me she remembered well when she was a young girl and the time came when the pattern used to be, the first year it was stopped her father put her up on a big high wall near the well, and bid her look down. And there she saw the whole place full of the *gentry*, and they playing and dancing and having their own games, they were in such joy to have done away with the pattern. I suppose the well belonged to them before it got the name of St. Patrick.

There's a small little house not far down the road where they used to be very fond of going. And a woman in the town asked the old woman that lived in it what did they look like. And she said "For all the world like people coming in to Chapel."

There was a girl coming back here one time from Clough, and instead of coming here she went the Esserkelly road and was led astray and a man met her and says he, "Why do you say you're going to Labane and it's to Roxborough you're facing?" and he turned her around. And when she got home she took off the bundle she had on her back, and what jumped out of it but a young hare.

Mrs. Casey:

I have a great little story about a woman—a jobber's wife that lived a mile beyond Ardrahan.

She had business one time in Ballyvaughan, and when she was on the road beyond Kinvara a man came to her out of a forth and he asked her to go in and to please a child that was crying. So she went in and she pleased the child, and she saw in a corner an old man that never stopped from crying. And when she went out again she asked the man that brought her in, why was the old man roaring and crying. The man pointed to a milch cow in the meadow and he said, "Before the day is over he will be in the place of that cow, and it will be brought into the forth to give milk to the child." And she can tell herself that was true, for in the evening when she was coming back from Ballyvaughan, she saw in that field a cow dead, and being cut in pieces, and all the poor people bringing away bits of it, that was the old man that had been put in its place. There is poison in that meat, but no poison ever comes off the fire, but you must mind to throw away the top of the pot.

That forth where I heard the talking long ago, and left my can, it's only the other day I was telling Pat Stephens of it that has the land. And he told me he put a trough in it to catch the water about a month ago. And the next day one of his best bullocks died.

Mrs. O'Brien:

It's a bad piece of the road that poor boy fell off his cart at and was killed. There's a forth near it,

and it's in that forth my five children are that were swept from me. I went and I told Father Carey I knew they were there, and he said "Say your prayers, my poor woman, that's all you can do." When they were young they were small and thin enough, they grew up like a bunch of rushes, but they got strong and stout and good-looking. Too good they were, so that everyone would remark them and would say, "Oh, look at Ellen O'Brien—look at Catherine—look at Martin! So good to work and so handsome, so loyal to their mother." And they were all taken from me, all gone now but one. Consumption they were said to get, but it never was in my family or in the father's, and how would they get it without some provocation? Four of them died with that, and Martin was drowned. One of the little girls was in America and the other at home, and they both got sick, and at the end of nine months both of them died.

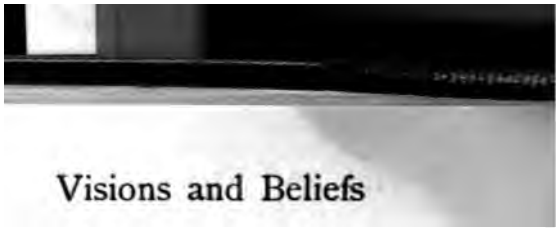
Only twice they got a warning. Michael that was the first to go was out one morning very early to bring a letter to Mr. Crowe. And he met on the road a small little woman, and she came across him and across him again, and then again, as if to be humbugging him. And he got afraid, and told me about her when he got home. And not long after that he died.

And Ellen used to be going to milk the cow for the nuns morning and evening, and there's a place she had to pass, a sort of enchanted place, I forget the name of it. And when she came home one

evening she said she'd go there no more, for when she was passing that place she saw a small little woman, with a little cloak about her, and her face not the size of a doll's face. And with the one look of her she got a fright and ran as fast as she could, and sat down to milk the cow. And when she was milking she looked up, and there was the small little woman coming along by the wall. And she said she'd never like to go up there again. So to move the thought out of her mind I said "Sure that's the little woman is stopping up at Shamus Mor's house." "Oh, it's not, Mother," said she; "I know well by her look she was no right person." "Then my poor girl you're lost," says I, "for I know it was the same woman that my husband saw." And sure enough, it was but a few weeks after that she died. There wasn't much change in them before their death, but there was a great change after.

And Martin, the last that went, was stout and strong and nothing ailed him, but he was drowned. He'd go down sometimes to bathe in the sea and one day he said he was going, and I said, "Do not, for you have no swim."

But a boy of the neighbours came after that and called to him, and I was making the little dinner for him, and I didn't see him from the door. And I never knew he was gone till when I went out of the house the girl from next door looked at me someway strange, and then she told me two boys were drowned, and then she told me one of them



was my own. Held down he was, they said, by something under water. *They* had him followed there.

It wasn't long after he died I woke one night and I felt some one near, and I struck the light and then I saw his shadow. He was wearing his little cap, but under it I knew his face and the colour of his hair. And he never spoke and he was going out the door and I called to him and said "Oh, Martin, come back to me and I'll always be watching for you." And every night after that I'd hear things thrown about the house outside, and noises. So I got afraid to stop in it, and went to live in another house, and I told the priest I knew Martin was not dead but that he was living. And about eight weeks after Catherine dying, I had what I thought was a dream. I thought I dreamt that I saw her sweeping out the floor of the room, and I said, "Catherine, why are you sweeping? Sure you know I sweep the floor down and the hearth every night." And I said "Tell me where you are now?" And she said, "I'm in the forth beyond." And she said "I have a great deal of things to tell you, but I must look out and see are they watching me"; now wasn't that very sharp for a dream? And she went to look out the door, but she never came back again.

And in the morning when I told it to a few respectable people they said "Take care but it might have been no dream, but herself that came back and talked to you." And I think it was, and

that she came back to see me, and to keep the place well swept.

Sure we know there were some in the forths in the old times, for my aunt's husband was brought away into one, and why wouldn't they be there now? He was sent back out of it again; a girl led him home, and she told him he was brought away because he answered to the first call and that he had a right only to answer to the third. But he didn't want to come home. He said he saw more people in it than he ever saw at a hurling, and that he'd ask no better place than it in high heaven.

The Banshee always cries for the O'Briens. And Anthony O'Brien was a fine man when I married him, and handsome, and I could have had great marriages if I didn't choose him, and many wondered at me. And when he was took ill and in the bed, Johnny Rafferty came in one day, and says he "Is Anthony living?" and I said he was. "For," says he, "as I was passing, I heard crying, crying, from the hill where the forths are, and I thought it must be for Anthony, and that he was gone." And then Ellen, the little girl, came running in, and she says, "I heard the mournfullest crying that ever you heard just behind the house." And I said "It must be the Banshee." And Anthony heard me say that where he was lying in the bed, and he called out, "If it's the Banshee it's for me,

and I must die today or tomorrow." And in the middle of the next day, he died.

One time I was passing by a forth down there, and I saw a thick smoke coming out of it, straight up it went and then it spread at the top. And when it was clearing away I saw two rows of birds, one on the one side and one on the other, and I stopped to look at them. They were white, and had shoulders and heads like dogs, and there was a great noise like a rattling, and a man that was passing by looked up and said "God speed you," and they flew away.

A Seaside Man:

There were five boys of the Callinans, and they rich and well-to-do, were out in a boat, and a ship came out from the shore and touched it and it sank, and the ship was seen no more. And one of the boys held on to the boat, and some men came out and brought him to land. But the second time after that he went out, he was swept.

An Old Man in Gort Workhouse:

I knew an old man was in here was greatly given to card-playing. And one night he was up on the hill beyond, towards Slieve Echtge, where there is a big forth, and he went into it, and there he found a lot of *them* playing cards. Like any other card-players they looked, and he sat down and played with them, and they played fair. And

when he woke in the morning, he was lying outside on the hill, and nothing under his head but a tuft of rushes.

John Mangan:

Old Hanrahan one time went out to the forth that's in front of his house and cut a bush, and he a fresh man enough. And next morning he hadn't a blade of hair on his head—not a blade. And he had to buy a wig and to wear it for the rest of his life. I remember him and the wig well.

And it was some years after that that Delane, the father of the great cricketer, was passing by that way, and the water had risen and he strayed off the road into it. And as he got farther and farther in, till he was covered to better than his waist, he heard like the voice of his wife crying, "Go on, John, go on farther." And he called out, "These are John Hanrahan's faeries that took the hair off him." "And what did you do then?" they asked him when he got safe to the house, and was telling this. And he said, "I turned my coat inside out, and after that they troubled me no more, and so I got safe to the road again." But no one ever had luck that meddled with a forth, so it's always said.

There's Mrs. Lynch's daughter was coming through the trees about eight months ago and when she came to a thicket of bushes, a short little man came out, about three feet high, dressed

all in white, and he white himself or grey, and asked her to come with him, and she ran away as fast as she could. And with the fright she got, she fell into a sickness—what they call the sickness of Peter and Paul—and you'd think she'd tear the house down when it comes on her.

I met a woman some time ago tolu me more about the forths in this place than ever I knew before, and well she might for she had passed seven years in them, working, working, minding children and the like all the time; no singing or dancing for her.

M. Haverty:

There was one Rock, was brought into a forth. A three-legged horse came for him one night and brought him away; and when he got there they all called him by his name.

There was a man up there cut a tree in one of them, and he was took ill immediately after, and didn't live long.

There's a bad bit of road near Kinvara Chapel, just when you get within sight of the sea. I know a man has to pass there, and he wouldn't go on the driver's side of the car, for it's to the right side those things are to be seen. Sure there was a boy lost his life falling off a car there last Friday week.

One night passing the big tree at Raheen I heard the sound of a handsaw in the air, and I looked up and there in the top of a larch tree that's near to a beech I saw a man sitting and cutting it with the handsaw. So I hurried away home. But the next time I passed that way I took a view of it to see might it have been one of the Dillons that might be stealing timber; and there was no sign of a cut or a touch in it at all.

There was a man on the road between Chevy and Marble Hill, where there is a faery plumb-stone, that stands straight up and it about five feet in height, and the man was building a house and carried it away to put above his door. And from the time he brought it away, all his stock began to die, and whenever he went in or out, night or day, he was severely beaten. So at last he took the stone down and put it back where it was before, and from that time nothing has troubled him.

John Mangan:

Myself and two of my brothers were over at Inchy Weir to catch a horse, and growing close by the water there was a bush the form of an umbrella, very close and thick at the top. So we began fooling as boys do, and I said, "I'll bet a button none of you will make a stone go through the bush." So I took up a pebble of cow-dung and threw it, and they all threw, and no sooner did

the pebble hit the bush than there came from it music, like a band playing. So we all ran for our lives, and when we had got about two hundred yards we looked back and we saw something moving round the bush, first it had the clothes of a woman and then of a man. So we stopped to see no more.

Well, it was some years after that when Sir William ordered all the bushes in that part to be cut down. And one Prendergast a boy that used to be a beater here and that went to America after, went to cut them just in the same place where I had seen that sight, and a thorn ran into his eye and blinded him, and he never got the sight of it again.

An Old Woman near Ballinsloe:

There are many forths around, and in that one beyond, there is often music heard. The smith's father heard the music one time he was passing and he could not stop from dancing till he was tired. I heard him tell that myself.

And over there to the left there is a forth had an opening in it, and the steward wanted to get it closed up, and he could get no men to do it. And at last a young man said he would, and he went to work and at the end of the week he was dead.

And there was a girl milking a cow not long after that, and she saw him coming to her, and she ran away, and he called to her to stop and she did not, and he said "That you may never milk

another cow!" And within a week, she herself was dead.

There was a woman over there in that house you can see, and she wanted to root up a forth; covetousness it was, she had plenty and she wanted more. And she tried to get a man to do it and she could not, but at last a man that had been turned out of his holding, and that was in want, said he would do it. And before he went to work he went on his two knees, and he wished that whatever harm might come from it might come on her, and not on himself. And so it did, and her hands got crippled and crappled. And they travelled the world and could get no relief for her, and her cattle began to die, and she died herself in the end. And the daughter and the son-in-law had to leave that house and to build another, for they were losing all the cattle, and they are left alone now, but the daughter lost a finger by it.

A Man near Corcomroe:

I saw a light myself one night in the big forth over there near the sea. Like a bonfire it was, and going up about thirty feet into the air.

Ghosts are to be heard about the forths. They make a heavy noise, and there are creaks in their shoes. Doing a penance I suppose they are. And there's many see the lights in the forths at Newtown.

J. Doheny:

One time I was cutting bushes up there near the river, and I cut a big thorn bush, I thought it no harm to do it when it wasn't standing by itself, but in a thicket, and it old and half-rotten. And when I had it cut, I heard some one talking very loud to my wife, that was gathering kippeens down in the field the other side of the wall. And I went down to know who it was talking to her. And when I asked her she said "No, it's to yourself some one was talking, for I heard his voice where you were, and I saw no one." So I said, "Surely it's one of them mourning for the bush I cut," for the sound of his voice was as if he was mad vexed.

I think it's not in the tree at the corner there's anything, it's something in the place. Not long ago there was one Greeley going to Galway with a load of barley, and when he came to that corner he heard the sound of a train crossing from inside the wall, and the horse stopped. And then he heard it a second time and the horse refused to go on, and at the end he had to turn back home again, for he had no use trying to make the horse go on.

There were ash trees growing around the blessed well at Corker, and one night Deeley, the uncle of Pat Deeley that lives beyond, and two other men went to cut them down, to get the makings of a car-body. And the next day Deeley's lip was drawn down—like this—and water running from

it for the rest of his life. I often see him; and as to the two other men, they died soon after.

And big Joyce that was a servant to John O'Hara, he went to cut trees one night near that hole at Raheen, near the corner of the road, and he was prevented, and never could get the handsaw near a tree, nor the other men that were with him.

And there was another man went and cut a bush not far from the Kinvara road, and with the first stroke he heard a sort of a cough or a groan come from beneath it, that was a token to him to leave it alone. But he wouldn't leave off, and his mouth was drawn to one side all of a sudden and in two days after he was dead. Surely, one should leave such things alone.

A Piper:

I had a fall myself in Galway the other day that I couldn't move my arm to play the pipes if you gave me Ireland. And a man said to me—and they are very smart people in Galway—that two or three got a fall and a hurt in that same place. "There is places in the sea where there is drowning," he said, "and places on the land as well where there do be accidents, and no man can save himself from them, for it is the will of God."

A Man Asking Alms:

It's not safe sometimes to meddle with walls. There was a man beyond Gort knocked some old walls not long ago, and he's dead since.

But it's by the big tree outside Raheen where you take the turn to Kinvara that the most things are seen. There was a boy living with Conor in Gort that was out before daylight with a load of hay in a cart, and he sitting on top of it, and he was found lying dead just beside the tree, where he fell from the top of the cart, and the horse was standing there stock-still. There was a shower of rain fell while he was lying there, and I passed the road two hours later, and saw where the dust was dry where his body had been lying. And it was only yesterday I was hearing a story of that very same place. There was a man coming from Galway with a ton weight of a load on his cart, and when he came to that tree the linching of his wheel came out, and the cart fell down. And presently a little man, about two and a half feet in height, came out from the wall and lifted up the cart, and held it up till he had the linching put up again. And he never said a word but went away as he came, and the man came in to Gort. And I remember myself, the black and white dog used to be on the road between Hanlon's gate and Gort. It was there for ten years and no one ever saw it, but one evening Father Boyle's man was going out to look at a few little sheep and lambs belonging to the priest, and when he came to the stile the dog put up its paws on it and looked at him, and he was afraid to go on. So next morning he told Father Boyle about it and he said "I think that you won't see it any more." And sure enough from that day it never was seen again.

Steve Simon:

I don't know did I draw down to you before, your ladyship, the greatest wonder ever I saw in my life?

I was passing by the forth at Corcomroe, coming back from some shopping I had done in Belharbour, and I saw twelve of the finest horses ever I saw, and riders on them racing round the forth. Many a race I saw since I lived in this world, but never a race like that, for tipping and tugging and welting the horses; the jockeys in coloured clothes, striped and blue, and little blue caps on them, and a lady in the front of them on a bayish horse and wearing a scarlet jacket.

I told what I saw the same evening to an old woman living near and she said, "Whatever you saw keep it secret, or some harm will come upon you." There was another thing I saw besides the riders. There were crowds and crowds of people, standing as we would against walls or on a stage, and taking a view. They were shouting, but the men racing on the horses said nothing at all. Never a race like that one, with the swiftness and the welting and fine horses that were in it.

What clothing had these people? They had coats on them, and on their back there were pictures, pictures in the form of people. Shields I think they were. Anyway there were pictures on them. Striped the coats were, and a sort of scollop on them the same as that screen in the window (a blind with Celtic design). They had

little blue caps, such as wore them, but some had nothing on the head at all; and they had blue slippers—those I saw of them—but I was afeared to take more than a side view except of the racers.

An Old Army Man:

You know the forth where the old man lost his hair? Well there's another man, Waters, that married Brian's sister, has the second sight, and there's a big bush left in that forth, and when he goes there he sees a woman sitting under it, and she lighting a fire.

Cloran's father was living over at Knockmaa one time and his wife died, and he believed it was taken into the hill she was. So he went one morning and dug a hole in the side of the hill. But the next morning when he went back to dig again, the hole was filled up and the grass growing over it as before. And this he did two or three times. And then some one told him to put his pick and his spade across the hole. And so he did, and it wasn't filled up again. But what happened after I don't know.

An Old Army Man:

That's a bad bit of road near Kinvara where the boy lost his life last week; I know it well. And I knew him, a quiet boy, and married to a widow woman; she wanted the help of a man, and he was young. What would ail him to fall off the side of an ass-car and to be killed?

XI

BLACKSMITHS

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BLACKSMITHS

I have been told:

Yes, they say blacksmiths have something about them, and if there's a seventh blacksmith in succession, from generation to generation, he can do many things, and if he gave you his curse you wouldn't be the better of it. There was one near the cliffs, Pat Doherty, but he did no harm to any one, but was as quiet as another. He is dead now and his son is a blacksmith too. (*Note 2.*)

There was a man one time that was a blacksmith, and he used to go every night playing cards, and for all his wife could say he wouldn't leave off doing it. So one night she got a boy to go stand in the old churchyard he'd have to pass, and to frighten him. So the boy did so, and began to groan and to try to frighten him when he came near. But it's well known that nothing of that kind can do any harm to a blacksmith. So he went in and got hold of the boy, and told him he had a mind to choke him, and went his way.

But no sooner was the boy left alone than there came about him something in the shape of a dog, and then a great troop of cats. And they surrounded him and he tried to get away home, but he had no power to go the way he wanted but had to go with them. And at last they came to an old forth and a faery bush, and he knelt down and made the sign of the cross and said a great many "Our Fathers," and after a time they went into the faery bush and left him. And he was going away and a woman came out of the bush, and called to him three times, to make him look back. And he saw that it was a woman that he knew before, that was dead, and so he knew that she was amongst the faeries.

And she said to him, "It's well for you that I was here, and worked hard for you, or you would have been brought in among them, and be like me." So he got home. And the blacksmith got home too and his wife was surprised to see he was no way frightened. But he said, "You might know that there's nothing of that sort could harm me."

For a blacksmith is safe from all, and when he goes out in the night he keeps always in his pocket a small bit of wire, and they know him by that. So he went on playing, and they grew very poor after.

And I knew a woman from the County Limerick had been *away*, and she could tell you all about

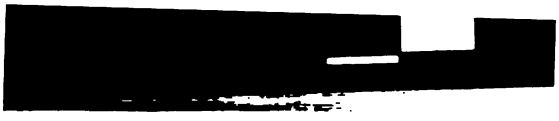
the forths in this place and how she was recovered. She met a man she knew on the road, and she out riding with them all on horseback, and told him to bring a bottle of forge-water and to throw it on her, and so he did, and she came back again.

Blacksmiths surely are safe from these things. And if a blacksmith was to turn his anvil upside down and to say malicious words, he could do you great injury.

There was a child that was changed, and my mother brought it a nice bit of potato cake one time, for tradesmen often have nice things on the table. But the child wouldn't touch it, for they don't like the leavings of a smith.

Blacksmiths have power, and if you could steal the water from the trough in the forge, it would cure all things.

And as to forges, there's some can hear working and hammering in them through the night.



XII

MONSTERS AND SHEOGUEY BEASTS

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MONSTERS AND SHEOGUEY BEASTS

THE Dragon that was the monster of the early world now appears only in the traditional folk-tales, where the hero, a new Perseus, fights for the life of the Princess who looks on crying at the brink of the sea, bound to a silver chair, while the Dragon is "put in a way he will eat no more kings' daughters." In the stories of today he has shrunk to eel or worm, for the persons and properties of the folk-lore of all countries keep being transformed or remade in the imagination, so that once in New England on the eve of George Washington's birthday, the decorated shop windows set me wondering whether the cherry tree itself might not be a remaking of the red-berried dragon-guarded rowan of the Celtic tales, or it may be of a yet more ancient apple. I ventured to hint at this in a lecture at Philadelphia, and next day one of the audience wrote me that he had looked through all the early biographies of Washington, and either the first three or the first three editions of the earliest—I have mislaid the letter—never mention the cherry tree at all.

The monstrous beasts told of today recall the visions of Maeldune on his strange dream-voyage,

where he saw the beast that was like a horse and that had "legs of a hound with rough sharp nails," and the fiery pigs that fed on golden fruit, and the cat that with one flaming leap turned a thief to a heap of ashes; for the folk-tales of the world have long roots, and there is nothing new save their reblossoming.

I have been told by a Car-driver:

I went to serve one Patterson at a place called Grace Dieu between Waterford and Tramore, and there were queer things in it. There was a woman lived at the lodge the other side from the gate, and one day she was looking out and she saw a woolpack coming riding down the road of itself.

There was a room over the stable I was put to sleep in, and no one near me. One night I felt a great weight on my feet, and there was something very weighty coming up upon my body and I heard heavy breathing. Every night after that I used to light the fire and bring up coal and make up the fire with it that it would be near as good in the morning as it was at night. And I brought a good terrier up every night to sleep with me on the bed. Well, one night the fire was lighting and the moon was shining in at the window, and the terrier leaped off the bed and he was barking and rushing and fighting and leaping, near to the ceiling and in under the bed. And I could see the shadow of him on the walls and on the ceiling, and I could see the shadow of another thing that was about two foot long and that had a head like a pike, and that was fighting

and leaping. They stopped after a while and all was quiet. But from that night the terrier never would come to sleep in the room again.

By Others:

The worst form a monster can take is a cow or a pig. But as to a lamb, you may always be sure a lamb is honest.

A pig is the worst shape they can take. I wouldn't like to meet anything in the shape of a pig in the night.

No, I saw nothing myself, I'm not one of those that can see such things; but I heard of a man that went with the others on rent day, and because he could pay no rent but only made excuses, the landlord didn't ask him in to get a drink with the others. So as he was coming home by himself in the dark, there was something on the road before him, and he gave it a hit with the toe of his boot, and it let a squeal. So then he said to it, "Come in here to my house, for I'm not asked to drink with them; I'll give drink and food to you." So it came in, and the next morning he found by the door a barrel full of wine and another full of gold, and he never knew a day's want after that.

Walking home one night with Jack Costello, there was something before us that gave a roar,

and then it rose in the air like a goose, and then it fell again. And Jackeen told me after that it had laid hold on his trousers, and he didn't sleep all night with the fright he got.

There's a monster in Lough Graney, but it's only seen once in seven years.

There is a monster of some sort down by Duras, it's called the ghost of Fiddeen. Some say it's only heard every seven years. Some say it was a flannel seller used to live there that had a short fardel. We heard it here one night, like a calf roaring.

One night my grandfather was beyond at Inchy where the lads from Gort used to be stealing rods, and he was sitting by the wall, and the dog beside him. And he heard something come running from Inchy Weir and he could see nothing, but the sound of its feet on the ground was like the sound of the feet of a deer. And when it passed by him the dog got in between him and the wall and scratched at him, but still he could see nothing but only could hear the sound of hoofs. So when it was passed he turned away home.

Another time, my grandfather told me, he was in a boat out on the lake here at Coole with two or three men from Gort. And one of them had an eel-spear and he thrust it into the water and it hit

something, and the man fainted, and they had to carry him in out of the boat to land. And when he came to himself he said that what he struck was like a horse or like a calf, but whatever it was, it was no fish.

There is a boy I knew, one Curtin near Ballinderreen, told me that he was going along the road one night and he saw a dog. It had claws like a cur, and a body like a person, and he couldn't see what its head was like. But it was moaning like a soul in pain, and presently it vanished, and there came most beautiful music, and a woman came out and he thought at first it was the Banshee, and she wearing a red petticoat. And a striped jacket she had on, and a white band about her waist. And to hear more beautiful singing and music he never did, but to know or to understand what she was expressing, he couldn't do it. And at last they came to a place by the roadside where there were some bushes. And she went in there and disappeared under them, and the most beautiful lights came shining where she went in. And when he got home, he himself fainted, and his mother put her beads over him, and blessed him and said prayers. So he got quiet at last.

I would easily believe about the dog having a fight with something his owner couldn't see. That often happens in this island, and that's why every man likes to have a black dog with

him at night—a black one is the best for fighting such things.

And a black cock everyone likes to have in their house—a March cock it should be.

I knew the captain of a ship used to go whale fishing, and he said he saw them by scores. But by his account they were no way like the ones McDaragh saw; it was I described them to him.

We don't give in to such things here as they do in the middle island; but I wouldn't doubt that about the dog. For they can see what we can't see. And there was a man here was out one night and the dog ran on and attacked something that was in front of him—a faery it was—but he could see nothing. And every now and again it would do the same thing, and seemed to be fighting something before him, and when they got home the man got safe into the house, but at the threshold the dog was killed.

And a horse can see many things, and if ever you're out late, and the horse to stop as if there was something he wouldn't pass, make the sign of the cross between his ears, and he'll go on then. And it's well to have a cock always in the house, if you can have it from a March clutch, and the next year if you can have another cock from a March clutch from that one, it's the best. And if you go late out of the house, and that there

is something outside it would be bad to meet, that cock will crow before you'll go out.

I'm sorry I wasn't in to meet you surely, knowing as much as I do about the faeries. One night I went with four or five others down by the mill to hunt rabbits. And when we got to the field by the river there was the sound of hundreds, some crying and the other part laughing, that we all heard them. And something came down to the river, first I thought he was a dog and then I saw he was too big and strange looking. And you'd think there wouldn't be a drop of water left in the river with all he drank. And I bid the others say nothing about it, for Patrick Green was lying sick at the mill, and it might be taken for a bad sign. And it wasn't many days after that he died.

My father told me that one night he was crossing this road, and he turned to the wall to close his shoe. And when he turned again there was something running through the field that was the size of a yearling calf, and black, and it ran across the road, and there was like the sound of chains in it. And when it came to that rock with the bush on it, it stopped and he could see a red light in its mouth. And then it disappeared. He used often to see a black dog in this road, and it used to be following him, and others saw it too. But one night the brother of the priest, Father Mitchel, saw it and he told the priest and he banished it.

The lake down there (Lough Graney) is an enchanted place, and old people told me that one time they were swimming there, and a man had gone out into the middle and they saw something like a great big eel making for him, and they called out, "If ever you were a great swimmer show us now how you can swim to the shore," for they wouldn't frighten him by saying what was behind him. So he swam to the shore, and he only got there when the thing behind him was in the place where he was. For there are queer things in lakes. I never saw anything myself, but one time I was coming home late from Scariff, and I felt my hair standing up on my head, and I began to feel a sort of shy and fearful, and I could feel that there was something walking beside me. But after a while there was a little stream across the road, and after I passed that I was all right again and could feel nothing near.

I never saw anything myself but once, early in the morning and I going to the May fair of Loughrea. It was a little way outside of the town I saw something that had the appearance of a black pig, and it was running in under the cart and under the ass's feet. And the ass would keep backing away from it, that it was hardly I could bring her along, till we got to the bridge of Cloon, and once we were over that we saw it no more, for it couldn't pass the running water. And all the time it was with us I was hitting at it with

my stick, and it would run from me then, for it was a hazel stick, and the hazel is blessed, and no wicked thing can stay when it is touched with it. It is likely the nuts are blessed too. Aren't they growing on the same tree?

I was over at Phayre's mill one time to get some boards sawed and they said I must wait an hour or so, where the mill wasn't free. And I had a load of turf to get, and I went along the road. And I heard something coming after me in the gutter, and it stood up over me like an elephant, and I put my hands behind me and I said, "Madad Fior," and he went away. It was just at the bridge he was, near Kilchriest, and when I was coming back after a while, just when I got to the bridge there, he was after me again. But I never saw him since then.

One time I was at the fair at Ballinasloe, and I but a young lad at the time, and a comrade with me that was but a young lad too. We brought in the sheep the Monday evening, and they were sold the Tuesday morning, and the master bid us to go home on the train. "Bad cess," said my comrade, "are we to get no good at all out of the fair? Let us stop," says he, "and get the good of it and go back by the mail train." So we went through the fair together and went to a dance, and the master never knew, and we went home on the mail train together. We got

out at Woodlawn and we were going home, and we heard a sort of a groaning and we could see nothing, and the boy that was with me was frightened, for though he was a strong boy, he was a timorous man. We found then the groaning coming from beyond the wall, and I went and put my two fists on the wall and looked over it. There were two trees on the other side of the wall, and I saw walking off and down from one tree to the other, something that was like a soldier or a sentry. The body was a man's body, and there was a black suit on it, but it had the head of a bear, the very head and *puss* of a bear. I asked what was on him. "Don't speak to me, don't speak to me," he said, and he stopped by the tree and was groaning and went away.

That is all that ever I saw, and I herding sheep in the lambing season, and falling asleep as I did sometimes, and walking up and down the field in my sleep.

My father told me that in the bad times, about the year '48, he used to be watching about in the fields, where the people did be stealing the crops. And there was no field in Coole he was afraid to go into by night except one, that is number three in the Lake Farm. For the dog that was about in those times stopped the night in the clump there. And Johnny Callan told me one night passing that field he heard the noise of a cart of stones thrown against the wall. But when he went back there

in the morning there was no sign of anything at all. My father never saw the dog himself but he was known to be there and he felt him.

And as for the monster, I never saw it in Coole Lake, but one day I was coming home with my two brothers from Tirneevan school, and there as we passed Dhulough we heard a great splashing, and we saw some creature put up its head, with a head and a mane like a horse. And we didn't stop but ran.

But I think it was not so big as the monster over here in Coole Lake, for Johnny Callan saw it, and he said it was the size of a stack of turf. But there's many could tell about that for there's many saw it, Dougherty from Gort and others.

As to the dog that used to be in the road, a friend of his own was driving Father Boyle from Kinvara late one night and there it was—first on the right side and then on the left of the car. And at last he told Father Boyle, and he said, "Look out now for it, and you'll see it no more," and no more he did, and that was the last of it.

But the driver of the mail-car often seen a figure of a woman following the car till it came to the churchyard beyond Ardrahan, and there it disappeared.

Father Boyle was a good man indeed—a child might speak to him. They said he had the dog or whatever it may be banished from the road, but of late I heard the driver of the mail-car

saying he sees it on one spot on the road every night. And there's a very lonely hollow beyond Doran's house, and I know a man that never passed by that hollow but what he'd fall asleep. But one night he saw a sort of a muffled figure and he cried out three times some good wish—such as "God have mercy on you"—and then it gave a great laugh and vanished and he saw it no more. As to the forths or other old places, how do we know what poor soul may be shut up there, confined in pain?

Sure a man the other day coming back from your own place, Inchy, when he came to the big tree, heard a squealing, and there he saw a sort of a dog, and it white, and it followed as if holding on to him all the way home. And when he got to the house he near fainted, and asked for a glass of water.

There's some sort of a monster at Tyrone, rising and slipping up and down in the sun, and when it cries, some one will be sure to die.

I didn't believe in them myself till one night I was coming home from a wedding, and standing on the road beside me I saw John Kelly's donkey that he always used to call Neddy. So he was standing in my way and I gave a blow at him and said, "Get out of that, Neddy." And he moved off only to come across me again, and to stop me

from going in. And so he did all the way, till as I was going by a bit of wood I heard come out of it two of the clearest laughs that ever you heard, and then two sorts of shouts. So I knew that it was having fun with me they were, and that it was not Neddy was there, but his likeness.

I knew a priest was stopped on the road one night by something in the shape of a big dog, and he couldn't make the horse pass it.

One night I saw the dog myself, in the boreen near my house. And that was a bad bit of road, two or three were killed there.

And one night I was between Kiltartan Chapel and Nolan's gate where I had some sheep to look after for the priest. And the dog I had with me ran out into the middle of the road, and there he began to yelp and to fight. I stood and watched him for a while, and surely he was fighting with another dog, but there was nothing to be seen.

And in the same part of the road one night I heard horses galloping, galloping past me. I could hear their hoofs, and they shod, on the stones of the road. But though I stood aside and looked—and it was bright moonlight—there were no horses to be seen. But they were there, and believe me they were not without riders.

Well, myself I once slept in a house with some strange thing. I had my aunt then, Mrs. Leary,

living near, and I but a small little girl at the time. And one day she came to our house and asked would I go sleep with her, and I said I would if she'd give me a ride on her back, and so she did. And for many a night after that she brought me to sleep with her, and my mother used to be asking why, and she'd give no reason.

Well, the cause of her wanting me was this. Every night so sure as she put the candle out, *it* would come and lie upon her feet and across her body and near smother her, and she could feel it breathing but could see nothing. I never felt anything at all myself, I being sound asleep before she quenched the light. At last she went to Father Smith—God rest his soul!—and he gave her a prayer to say at the moment of the Elevation of the Mass. So the next time she attended Mass she used it, and that night it was wickeder than ever it had been.

So after that she wrote to her son in America to buy a ticket for her, and she went out to him and remained some years. And it was only after she came back she told me and my mother what used to happen on those nights, and the reason she wanted me to be beside her.

There was never any one saw so many of those things as Johnny Hardiman's father on this estate, and now he's old and got silly, and can't tell about them any more. One time he was walking into Gort along the Kiltartan road, and

he saw one of them before him in the form of a tub, and it rolling along.

Another time he was coming home from Kinvara, and a black and white dog came out against him from the wall, but he took no notice of it. But when he got near his own house it came out against him again and bit him in the leg, and he got hold of it and lifted it up and took it by the throat and choked it; and when he was sure it was dead he threw it by the roadside. But in the morning he went out first thing early to look at the body, and there was no sign at all of it there.

So I believe indeed that old Michael Barrett hears them and sees them. But they do him no mischief nor harm at all. They wouldn't, and he such an old resident. But there's many wouldn't believe he sees anything because they never seen them themselves.

I never did but once, when I was a slip of a girl beyond at Lissatiraheely, and one time I went across to the big forth to get a can of water. And when I got near to it I heard voices, and when I came to where the water runs out they were getting louder and louder. And I stopped and looked down, and there in the passage where the water comes I seen a dog within, and there was a great noise—working I suppose they were. And I threw down the can and turned and ran, and never went back for it again. But here since I

lived in Coole I never seen anything and never was afeared of anything except one time only in the evening, when I was walking down the little by-lane that leads to Ballinamantane. And there standing in the path before me I seen the very same dog that was in the old forth before. And I believe I leaped the wall to get away into the high-road. And what day was that but the very same day that Sir William—the Lord be with his soul!—was returned a Member of Parliament, and a great night it was in Kiltartan.

But I'm noways afeared of anything and I give you my word I'd walk in the dead of night in the nut-wood or any other place—except only the cross beyond Inchy, I'd sooner not go by there. There's two or three has their life lost there—Heffernan of Kildesert, one of your ladyship's own tenants, he was one. He was at a fair, and there was a horse another man wanted, but he got inside him and got the horse. And when he was riding home, when he came to that spot it reared back and threw him, and he was taken up dead. And another man—one Gallagher—fell off the top of a creel of turf in the same place and lost his life. And there was a woman hurted some way another time. What's that you're saying, John—that Gallagher had a drop too much taken? That might be so indeed; and what call has a man that has drink taken to go travel upon top of a creel of turf?

That dog I met in the boreen at Ballinamantane, he was the size of a calf, and black, and his paws the size of I don't know what. I was sitting in the house one day, and he came in and sat down by the dresser and looked at me. And I didn't like the look of him when I saw the big eyes of him, and the size of his legs. And just then a man came in that used to make his living by making mats, and he used to lodge with me for a night now and again. And he went out to bring his cart away where he was afraid it'd be knocked about by the people going to the big bonefire at Kiltartan cross-roads. And when he went out I looked out the door, and there was the dog sitting under the cart. So he made a hit at it with a stick, and it was in the stones the stick stuck, and there was the dog sitting at the other side of him. So he came in and gave me abuse and said I must be a strange woman to have such things about me. And he never would come to lodge with me again. But didn't the dog behave well not to do him an injury after he hitting it? It was surely some man that was in that dog, some soul in trouble.

Beasts will sometimes see more than a man will. There were three young chaps I know went up near Ballyturn to hunt coneens (young rabbits) and they threw the dog over the wall. And when he was in the field he gave a yelp and drew back as if something had struck him on the head. And

with all they could do, and the rabbits and the coneens running about the field, they couldn't get him to stir from that and they had to come home with no rabbits.

One time I was helping Sully, the butcher in Loughrea, and I had to go to a country house to bring in a measly pig the people had, and that he was to allow them something for. So I got there late and had to stop the night. And in the morning at daylight I looked from the window and saw a cow eating the potatoes, so I went down to drive him off. And in the kitchen there was lying by the hearth a dog, a speckled one, with spots of black and white and yellow. And when he saw me he got up and went over to the door and went out through it. And then I saw that the door was shut and locked. So I went back again and told the people of the house what I saw and they were frightened and made me stop the next night. And in the night the clothes were taken off me and a heavy blow struck me in the chest, and the feel of it was like the feel of ice. So I covered myself up again and put my hand under the bedclothes, and I never came to that house again.

I never seen anything myself, but I remember well that when I was a young chap there was a black dog between Coole gatehouse and Gort for many a year, and many met him there. Tom

Miller came running into our house one time when he was after seeing him, and at first sight he thought he was a man, where he was standing with his paws up upon the wall, and then he vanished out of sight. But there never was any common dog the size of him, and it's many a one saw him, and it was Father Boyle that banished him out of it at last.

Except that thing at Inchy Weir, I never saw anything myself. But one evening I parted from Larry Cuniffe in the yard, and he went away through the path in Shanwalla and bid me good-night. But two hours after, there he was back again in the yard, and bid me light a candle was in the stable. And he told me that when he got into Shanwalla a little chap about as high as his knee, but having a head as big as a man's body, came beside him and led him out of the path and round about, and at last it brought him to the limekiln, and there left him.

There is a dog now at Lismara, black and bigger than a natural dog, is about the roads at night. He wouldn't be there so long if any one had the courage to question him.

Stephen O'Donnell in Connemara told me that one time he shot a hare, and it turned into a woman, a neighbour of his own. And she had his butter taken for the last two years, but she begged

and prayed for life on her knees, so he spared her, and she gave him back his butter after that, a double yield.

There was a woman at Glenlough when I was young could change herself into an eel. It was in Galway Workhouse Hospital she got the knowledge. A woman that had the knowledge of doing it by witchcraft asked her would she like to learn, and she said that she would, for she didn't know what it would bring on her. For every time she did it, she'd be in bed a fortnight after with all she'd go through. Sir Martin O'Neill when he was a young lad heard of it, and he got her into a room, and made her do it for him, and when he saw her change to an eel he got frightened and tried to get away, but she got between him and the door, and showed her teeth at him and growled. She wasn't the better of that for a fortnight after.

Indeed the porter did me great good, a good that I'd hardly like to tell you, not to make a scandal. Did I drink too much of it? Not at all, I have no fancy for it, but the nights seemed to be long. But this long time I am feeling a worm in my side that is as big as an eel, and there's more of them in it than that, and I was told to put sea-grass to it, and I put it to the side the other day, and whether it was that or the porter I don't know, but there's some of them gone out of it, and I think it's the porter.

I knew a woman near Clough was out milking her cow, and when she got up to go away she saw one of those worms coming after her, and it eight feet long, and it made a jump about eight yards after her. And I heard of a man went asleep by a wall one time, and one of them went down his throat and he never could get rid of it till a woman from the North came. And what she bade him do was to get a bit of old crock butter and to make a big fire on the hearth, and to put the butter in a half round on the hearth, and to get two men to hold him over it. And when the worms got the smell of the butter they jumped out of his mouth, seven or eight one after another, and it was in the fire they fell and they were burned, and that was an end of them.

As to hares, there's something queer about them, and there's some that it's dangerous to meddle with, and that can go into any form where they like. Sure, Mrs. Madden is after having a young son, and it has a harelip. But she says that she doesn't remember that ever she met a hare or looked at one. But if she did, she had a right to rip a small bit of the seam of her dress or her petticoat, and then it would have no power to hurt her at all.

Doran the herd says, he wouldn't himself eat the flesh of a hare. There's something unnatural about it. But as to them being unlucky,

that may be all talk. But there's no doubt at all that a cow is found sometimes to be run dry, and the hare to be seen coming away from her.

One time when we lived just behind Gort my father was going to a fair. And it was the custom in those days to set out a great deal earlier than what it is now. So it was not much past midnight when he got up and went out the door, and the moon shining bright. And then he saw a hare walk in from the street and turn down by the garden, and another after it, and another and another till he counted twelve. And they all went straight one after another and vanished. And my father came in and shut the door, and never went out again till it was broad daylight.

There was a man watching the fire where two hares were cooking and he heard them whistling in the pot. And when the people of the house came home they were afraid to touch them, but the man that heard the whistling ate a good meal of them and was none the worse

There was an uncle of my own lived over near Garryland. And one day himself and another man were going through the field, and they saw a hare, and the hound that was with them gave chase, and they followed.

And the hound was gaining on the hare and it made for a house, where the half-door was open.

And the hound made a snap at it and touched it as it leaped the half-door. And when my uncle and the others came up, they could find no hare, but only an old woman in the house—and she bleeding. So there's no doubt at all but it was she took the form of a hare. My uncle spent too much money after, and gave up his land and went to America.

As to hares, there was a man out with his greyhound and it gave chase to a hare. And it made for a house, and went in at the window, and the hound just touched the leg. And when the man came up, he found an old woman in the house, and he asked leave to search the house and so he did in every place, but there was no hare to be seen. But when he came in she was putting a pot on the fire, so he said that he must look in the pot, and he took the cover off, and it was full of blood. And before the hound gave chase, he had seen the hare sucking the milk from a cow.

As to hares, there's no doubt at all there's some that's not natural. One night I was making pot-whiskey up in that hill beyond. Yes indeed, for three year, I did little but run to and fro to the still, and one December, I was making it for the Christmas and I was taken and got nine weeks in gaol for it—and £16 worth of whiskey spilled that night. But there's mean people in the world; and he did it for

half a sovereign, and had to leave the country after and go to England. Well, one night, I was watching by the fire where it was too fierce, and it would have burned the oats. And over the hill and down the path came two hares and walked on and into the wood. And two more after that, and then by fours they came, and by sixes, and I'd want a slate and a pencil to count all I saw, and it just at sunrise. And some of them were as thin as thin. And there's no doubt at all that those were not *hares* I saw that night.

As to hares, they're the biggest fairies of all. Last year the boys had one caught, and I put it in the pot to wash it and it after being skinned, and I heard a noise come from the pot—grr-grr—and nothing but cold water in it. And I ran to save my life, and I told the boys to have nothing to do with it, but they wouldn't mind me. And when they tried to eat it, and it boiled, they couldn't get their teeth into the flesh of it, and as for the soup, it was no different from potato-water.

The village of Lissavohalane has a great name for such things. And it's certain that once one night every year, in the month of November, all the cats of the whole country round gather together there and fight. My own two cats were nearly dead for days after it last year, and the neighbours told me the same of theirs.

There was a woman had a cat and she would feed it at the table before any other one; and if it did not get the first meat that was cooked, the hair would rise up as high as that. Well, there were priests came to dinner one day, and when they were helped the first, the hair rose up on the cat's back. And one of them said to the woman it was a queer thing to give in to a cat the way she did, and that it was a foolish thing to be giving it the first of the food. So when it heard that, it walked out of the house, and never came into it again.

There's something not right about cats. Steve Smith says he knew a keeper that shot one, and it went into a sort of a heap, and when he came near, it spoke, and he found it was some person, and it said it had to walk its seven acres. And there's some have heard them together at night talking Irish.

There was a hole over the door of the house that I used to live in, where Murphy's house is now, to let the smoke out, for there was no chimney. And one day a black cat jumped in at the hole, and stopped in the house and never left us for a year. But on the day year he came he jumped out again at the same hole and didn't go out of the door that was standing open. There was no mistake about it, it was the day year.

As to cats, they're a class in themselves. They're

good to catch mice and rats, but just let them come in and out of the house for that; they're about their own business all the time. And in the old times they could talk. And it's said that the cats gave a shilling for what they have; fourpence that the housekeeper might be careless and leave the milk about that they'd get at it; and fourpence that they'd tread so light that no one would hear them, and fourpence that they'd be able to see in the dark. And I might as well throw out that drop of tea I left on the dresser to cool, for the cat is after tasting it and I wouldn't touch it after that. There might be a hair in it, and the hair of a cat is poison.

There was a man had a house full of children, and one day he was taking their measure for boots. And the cat that was sitting on the hearth said, "Take my measure for a pair of boots along with the rest." So the man did, and when he went to the shoemaker he told him of what the cat had said. And there was a man in the shop at the time, and he having two greyhounds with him, and one of them all black without a single white hair. And he said, "Bring the cat here tomorrow. You can tell it that the boots can't be made without it coming for its measure." So the next day he brought the cat in a bag, and when he got to his shop the man was there with his greyhounds, and he let the cat out, and it praying him not to loosen the bag. And

it made away through the fields and the hounds after it, and whether it killed one of them I don't know, but anyhow the black hound killed it, the one that had not a white hair on its body.

You should never be too attentive to a cat, but just to be civil and to give it its share.

Cats were serpents, and they were made into cats at the time, I suppose, of some change in the world. That's why they're hard to kill and why it's dangerous to meddle with them. If you annoy a cat it might claw you or bite you in a way that would put poison in you, and that would be the serpent's tooth.

There was an uncle of mine near Galway, and one night his wife was very sick, and he had to go to the village to get something for her. And it's a very lonely road, and as he was going what should he see but a great number of cats, walking along the road, and they were carrying a young cat, and crying it.

And when he was on his way home again from the village he met them again, and one of the cats turned and spoke to him like a person would, and said, "Bid Lady Betty to come to the funeral or she'll be late." So he ran on home in a great fright, and he couldn't speak for some time after getting back to the house, but sat there by the fire in a chair. And at last he began to tell

his wife what had happened. And when he said that he had met a cat's funeral, his own cat that was sleeping by the hearth began to stir her tail, and looked up at him, affectionate like. But when he got to where he was bid send Lady Betty to the funeral, she made one dash at his face and scraped it, she was so mad that she wasn't told at once. And then she began to tear at the door, that they had to let her out.

For cats is faeries, and every night they're obliged to travel over seven acres; that's why you hear them crying about the country. It was an old woman at the strand told me that, and she should know, for she lived to a hundred years of age.

I saw three young weasels out in the sea, squealing, squealing, for they couldn't get to land, and I put out a bunch of seaweed and brought them to the land, and they went away after. I did that for them. Weasels are not *right*, no more than cats; and I'm not sure about foxes.

Rats are very bad, because a rat if one got the chance would do his best to bite you, and I wouldn't like at all to get the bite of a rat. But weasels are serpents, and if they would spit at any part of your body it would fester, and you would get blood poisoning within two hours.

I knew an old doctor—Antony Coppinger at Clifden—and he told me that if the weasels had

the power of other beasts they would not leave a human living in the world. And he said the wild wide wilderness of the sea was full of beasts mostly the same as on earth, like bonavs and like cattle, and they lying at the bottom of the sea as quiet as cows in a field.

It is wrong to insult a weasel, and if you pelt them or shoot them they will watch for you forever to ruin you. For they are enchanted and understand all things.

There is Mrs. Coneely that lives up the road, she had a clutch of young geese on the floor, and a weasel walked in and brought away one of them, but she said nothing to that.

But it came in again, and took a hold of another of the geese and Mrs. Coneely said, "Oh, I'm not begrudging you what you have taken, but leave these to me for it is hard I earned them, and it is great trouble I had rearing them. But go," she said, "to the shoemaker's home beyond, where they have a clutch, and let you spare mine. And that I may never sin," she said, "but it walked out, for they can understand everything, and it did not leave one of the clutch that was at the shoemaker's."

It is why I called to you now when I saw you sitting there so near to the sea; I thought the tide might steal up on you, or a weasel might chance to come up with a fish in its mouth, and to give you a start. It's best if you see one to speak

nice to it, and to say, "I wouldn't be begrudging you a pair of boots or of shoes if I had them." If you treat them well they will treat you well.

And to see a weasel passing the road before you, there's nothing in the world like that to bring you all sorts of good luck.

I was out in the field one time tilling potatoes, and two or three more along with me, and a weasel put its head out of the wall—a double stone wall it was—and one of the lads fired a stone at it. Well, within a minute there wasn't a hole of the wall but a weasel had put its head out of it, about a thousand of them, I saw that myself. Very spiteful they are. I wouldn't like them.

The weasels, the poor creatures, they will do nothing at all on you if you behave well to them and let them alone, but if you do not, they will not leave a chicken in the yard. And magpies, let you do nothing on them, or they will suck every egg and leave nothing in the garden; but if you leave them to themselves they will do nothing but to come into the street to pick a bit with the birds.

The granyóg (hedgehog) will do no harm to chickens or the like; but if he will get into an orchard he will stick an apple on every thorn,

and away with him to a scalp with them to be eating through the winter.

I met with a granyóg one day on the mountain, and that I may never sin, he was running up the side of it as fast as a race-horse.

There is not much luck in killing a seal. There was a man in these parts was very fond of shooting and killing them. And seals have claws the same as cats, and he had two daughters, and when they were born, they had claws the same as seals. I believe there is one of them living yet.

But the thing it is not right to touch is the *ron* (seal) for they are in the Sheogue. It is often I see them on the strand, sitting there and wiping themselves on the rocks. And they have a hand with five fingers, like any Christian. I seen six of them, coming in a boat one time with a man from Connemara, that is the time I saw they had the five fingers.

There was a man killed one of them over there near the point. And he came to the shore and it was night, and he was near dead with the want of a blast of a pipe, and he saw a light from a house on the side of a mountain, and he went in to ask a coal of fire to kindle the pipe. And when he went in, there was a woman, and she called out to a man that was lying stretched on the bed in the room, and she said, "Look till you see who this man is." And

the man that was on the bed says, "I know you, for I have the sign of your hand on me. And let you get out of this now," he said, "as fast as you can, and it will be best for you." And the daughter said to him, "I wonder you to let him go as easy as that." And you may be sure the man made off and made no delay. It was a Sheogue house that was; and the man on the bed was the *ron* he had killed, but he was not dead, being of the Sheogues.

XIII

FRIARS AND PRIEST CURES

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FRIARS AND PRIEST CURES

blue blinds to the windows like little bars of timber without. You can see where the friars are buried down dead to the end of the world.

"They give out clothes to the poor, bedclothes and day clothes; it is the beautifullest place from heaven out; summer houses and pears; glass in the walls around."

I have been told:

The Esker friars used to do great cures—Father Callaghan was the best of them. They used to do it by reading, but what it was they read no one knew, some secret thing.

There was a girl brought from Clare one time, that had lost her wits, and she tied on a cart with ropes. And she was brought to Father Callaghan and he began reading over her, and then he made a second reading, and at the end of that, he bid them unloose the ropes, and when they did she got up quite quiet, but very shy looking and ashamed, and would not wait for the cart but walked away.

Father Callaghan was with a man near this one time, one Tully, and they were talking about the faeries and the man said he didn't believe in them at all. And Father Callaghan called him to the door and put up his fingers and bade him look out through them, and there he saw hundreds and hundreds of the smallest little men he ever saw and they hurling and killing one another.

The friars are gone and there are missioners come in their place and all they would do for

you is to bless holy water, and as long as you would keep it, it would never get bad.

My daughter, Mrs. Meehan, that lives there below, was very bad after her first baby being born, and she wasted away and the doctors could do nothing for her. My husband went to Biddy Early for her, but she said, "Mother for daughter, father for son" and she could do nothing for her because I didn't go. But I had promised God and the priest I would never go to her, and so I kept to my word. But Mrs. Meehan was so bad she kept to the bed, and one day one of the neighbours said I had a right to bring her to the friars at Esker. And he said, "It's today you should be in it, Monday, for a Monday gospel is the best, the gospel of the Holy Ghost." So I got the cart after and put her in it, and she lying down, and we had to rest and to take out the horse at Lenane, and we got to Craughwell for the night. And the man of the house where we got lodging for the night said the priest that was doing cures now was Father Blake and he showed us the way to Esker. And when we got there he was in the chapel, and my daughter was brought in and laid on a form, and I went out and waited with the cart, and within half an hour the chapel door opened, and my daughter walked out that was carried in. And she got up on the cart herself. It was a gospel had been read over her. And I said, "I wish you had asked a gospel to

bring with you home." And after that we saw a priest on the other side of a dry stone wall, and he learning three children. And she asked a gospel of him, and he said, "What you had today will do you, and I haven't one made up at this time." So she came home well. She went another time there, when she had something and asked for a gospel, and Father Blake said, "We're out of doing it now, but as you were with us before, I'll do it for you." And she wanted to give him £1 but he said, "If I took it I would do nothing for you." So she said, "I'll give it to the other man," and so she did.

I often saw Father Callaghan in Esker and the people brought to him in carts. Many cures he did, but he was prevented often. And I knew another priest did many cures, but he was carried away himself after, to a lunatic asylum. And when he came back, he would do no more.

There was a little chap had but seven years, and he was doing no good, but whistling and twirling, and the father went to Father Callaghan, that was just after coming out of the gaol when he got there, for doing cures; it is a gaol of their own they had. The man asked him to do a cure on his son, and Father Callaghan said, "I wouldn't like him to be brought here, but I will go some day to your house; I will go with my dog and my hound as if fowling, and I will bring no

sign of a car or a carriage at all." So he came one day to the house and knocked at the door. And when he came in he said to the father, "Go out and bring me in a bundle of sally rods that will be as thin as rushes, and divide them into six small parts," he said, "and twist every one of the six parts together." And when that was done, he took the little bundle of rods, and he beat the child on the head with them one after another till they were in flitters and the child roaring. Then he laid the child in the father's arms, and no sooner there than it fell asleep, and Father Callaghan said to the father, "What you have now is your own, but it wasn't your own that was in it before."

There used to be swarms of people going to Esker, and Father Callaghan would say in Irish, "Let the people in the Sheogue stand at one side," and he would go over and read over them what he had to read.

There was an uncle of my own was working at Ballycluan the time the Quakers were making a place there, and it was the habit when the summer was hot to put the beds out into the barn. And one night he was sleeping in the barn, and something came and lay on him in the bed; he could not see what it was, but it was about the size of the foal of a horse. And the next night it came again and the next, and lay on him, and he put out

his left hand to push it from him, and it went from him quite quiet, but if it did, when he rose in the morning, he was not able to stretch out his hand, and he was a long time like that and then his father brought him to the friars at Esker, and within twelve minutes one of them had him cured, reading over him, but I'm not sure was it Father Blake or Father Callaghan.

But it was not long after that till he fell off his cart as if he was knocked off it, and broke his leg. The coppinger had his leg cured, but he did not live long, for the third thing happened was, he threw up his heart's blood and died.

For if you are cured of one thing that comes on you like that, another thing will come on you in its place, or if not on you, on some other person, maybe some one in your own family. It is very often I noticed that to happen.

The priests in old times used to have the power to cure strokes and madness and the like, but the Pope and the Bishops have that stopped; they said that the people will get out of witchcraft little by little.

Priests can do cures if they will, and it's not out of the Gospel they do them, but out of a book specially for the purpose, so I believe. But something falls on them or on the things belonging to them, if they do it too often.

But Father Keeley for certain did cures. It was he cured Mike Madden's neck, when everyone else had failed—so they had—though Mike has never confessed to it.

The priests can do cures surely, and surely they can put harm on you. But they wouldn't do that unless they'd be sure a man would deserve it. One time at that house you see up there beyond, Roche's, there was a wedding and there was some fighting came out of it, and bad blood. And Father Boyle was priest at that time, and he was vexed and he said he'd come and have stations at the house, and they should all be reconciled.

So he came on the day he appointed and the house was settled like a chapel, and some of the people there was bad blood between came, but not all of them, and Roche himself was not there. And when the stations were over Father Boyle got his book, and he read the names of those he had told to be there, and they answered, like a schoolmaster would call out the names of his scholars. And when Roche's name was read and he not there to answer, with the dint of madness Father Boyle quenched the candles on the altar, and he said this house and all that belong to it will go away to nothing, like the froth that's going down the river.

And if you look at the house now you'll see the way it is, not a stable or an outhouse left standing, and not one of the whole family left in it but

Roche, and he paralysed. So they can do both harm and good.

There was a man out in the mountains used to do cures, and one day on a little road the priest met him, and stopped his car and began to abuse him for the cures he was doing.

And then the priest went on, and when he had gone a bit of the road his horse fell down. And he came back and called to the man and said, "Come help me now, for this is your doing, to make the horse fall." And the man said, "It's none of my doing, but it's the doing of my master, for he was vexed with the way you spoke. But go back now and you'll find the horse as he was before." So he went back and the horse had got up and was standing, and nothing wrong with him at all. And the priest said no more against him from that day.

My son is lame this long time; a fine young man he was, about seventeen years—and a pain came in his knee all of a moment. I tried doctors with him and I brought him to the friars in Loughrea, and one of them read a gospel over him, and the pain went after that, but the knee grew out to be twisted like. The friar said it was surely he had been overheated. A little old maneen he was, very ancient. I knew well it was the *drochuil* that did it; there by the side of the road he was sitting when he got the frost.

There was a needlewoman used to be sewing late on a Saturday night, and sometimes if there was a button or a thread wanting she would put it in, even if it was Sunday morning; and she lived in Loughrea that is near your own home. And one day she went to the loch to get a can of water, and it was in her hand. And in a minute a blast of wind came that rose all the dust and the straws and knocked herself. And more than that, her mouth was twisted around to her poll.

There were some people saw her, and they brought her home, and within a week her mother brought her to the priest. And when he saw her he said, "You are the best mother ever there was, for if you had left her nine days without bringing her to me, all I could do would not have taken off her what is on her." He asked then up to what time did she work on the Saturday night, and she said up to one or two o'clock, and sometimes on a Sunday morning. So he took off what was on her, and bade her do that no more, and she got well, but to the last there was a sort of a twisted turn in her mouth.

That woman now I am telling you of was an aunt of my own.

Father Nolan has a kind heart, and he'd do cures. But it's hard to get them, unless it would be for some they had a great interest in. But Father McConaghy is so high in himself, he wouldn't do anything of that sort. When Johnny

Dunne was bad, two years ago, and all but given over, he begged and prayed Father McConaghy to do it for him. And he refused and said, "You must commit yourself to the mercy of Almighty God," and Johnny Dunne, the poor man, said, "It's a hard thing for a man that has a house full of children to be left to the mercy of Almighty God."

But there's *some* that can help. My father told me long ago that my sister was lying sick for a long time, and one night a beggarman came to the door and asked for shelter. And he said, "I can't give you shelter, with my daughter lying sick in the room." "Let me in, it's best for you," says he. And in the morning he went away, and the sick girl rose up, as well as ever she was before.

Father Flaherty, when he was a curate, could open the eyes that were all but closed in death, but he wouldn't have such things spoken of now. Losses they may have, but that's not all. Whatever evil thing they raise, they may not have strength after to put it down again, and so they may be lost themselves in the end.

Surely they can do cures, and they can tell sometimes the hour you'd go. There was a girl I knew was sick, and when the priest came and saw her, he said, "Between the two Masses tomorrow she'll be gone," and so she was. And

those that saw her after, said that it was the face of her mother that died before that was on the bed, and that it was her mother had taken her to where she was.

And Mike Barrett surely saw a man brought in a cart to Father Curley's house when he lived in Cloon, and carried upstairs to him, and he walked down out of the house again, sound and well. But they must lose something when they do cures —either their health or something else, though many say no one did so many cures as Father Fitzgerald when he was a curate. Father Airlie one time was called in to Glover's house where he was lying sick, and did a cure on him. And he had a cow at the time that was in calf. And soon after some man said to him "The cow will be apt soon to calve," though it wasn't very near the time. And Father Airlie said "She'll never live to do that." And sure enough in a couple of days after she was dead.

SWEDENBORG, MEDIUMS, AND THE DESOLATE PLACES

SWEDENBORG, MEDIUMS, AND THE DESOLATE PLACES

I

SOME fifteen years ago I was in bad health and could not work, and Lady Gregory brought me from cottage to cottage while she began to collect the stories in this book, and presently when I was at work again she went on with her collection alone till it grew to be, so far as I know, the most considerable book of its kind. Except that I had heard some story of "The Battle of the Friends" at Aran and had divined that it might be the legendary common accompaniment of death, she was not guided by any theory of mine, but recorded what came, writing it out at each day's end and in the country dialect. It was at this time mainly she got the knowledge of words that makes her little comedies of country life so beautiful and so amusing. As that ancient system of belief unfolded before us, with unforeseen probabilities and plausibilities, it was as though we had begun to live in a dream, and one day Lady Gregory said to me when we had passed an old man in the wood: "That old man may know the secret of the ages."

I had noticed many analogies in modern spiritism and began a more careful comparison, going a good deal to séances for the first time and reading all writers of any reputation I could find in English or French. I found much that was moving, when I had climbed to the top story of some house in Soho or Holloway, and, having paid my shilling, awaited, among servant girls, the wisdom of some fat old medium. That is an absorbing drama, though if my readers begin to seek it they will spoil it, for its gravity and simplicity depends on all, or all but all, believing that their dead are near.

I did not go there for evidence of the kind the Society for Psychical Research would value, any more than I would seek it in Galway or in Aran. I was comparing one form of belief with another, and like Paracelsus, who claimed to have collected his knowledge from midwife and hangman, I was discovering a philosophy. Certain things had happened to me when alone in my own room which had convinced me that there are spiritual intelligences which can warn us and advise us, and, as Anatole France has said, if one believes that the Devil can walk the streets of Lisbon, it is not difficult to believe that he can reach his arm over the river and light Don Juan's cigarette. And yet I do not think I have been easily convinced, for I know we make a false beauty by a denial of ugliness and that if we deny the causes of doubt we make a false faith, and that we must excite the whole being into activity if we would

offer to God what is, it may be, the one thing germane to the matter, a consenting of all our faculties. Not but that I doubt at times, with the animal doubt of the Middle Ages that I have found even in pious countrywomen when they have seen some life come to an end like the stopping of a clock, or that all the perceptions of the soul, or the weightiest intellectual deductions, are not at whiles but a feather in the daily show.

I pieced together stray thoughts written out after questioning the familiar of a trance medium or automatic writer, by Allen Cardec, or by some American, or by myself, or arranged the fragments into some pattern, till I believed myself the discoverer of a vast generalization. I lived in excitement, amused to make Holloway interpret Aran, and constantly comparing my discoveries with what I have learned of mediæval tradition among fellow students, with the reveries of a Neoplatonist, of a seventeenth-century Platonist, of Paracelsus or a Japanese poet. Then one day I opened *The Spiritual Diary* of Swedenborg, which I had not taken down for twenty years, and found all there, even certain thoughts I had not set on paper because they had seemed fantastic from the lack of some traditional foundation. It was strange I should have forgotten so completely a writer I had read with some care before the fascination of Blake and Boehme had led me away.

II

It was indeed Swedenborg who affirmed for the modern world, as against the abstract reasoning of the learned, the doctrine and practice of the desolate places, of shepherds and of midwives, and discovered a world of spirits where there was a scenery like that of earth, human forms, grotesque or beautiful, senses that knew pleasure and pain, marriage and war, all that could be painted upon canvas, or put into stories to make one's hair stand up. He had mastered the science of his time, he had written innumerable scientific works in Latin, had been the first to formulate the nebular hypothesis and wrote a cold abstract style, the result it may be of preoccupation with stones and metals, for he had been assessor of mines to the Swedish Government, and of continual composition in a dead language.

In his fifty-eighth year he was sitting in an inn in London, where he had gone about the publication of a book, when a spirit appeared before him who was, he believed, Christ himself, and told him that henceforth he could commune with spirits and angels. From that moment he was a mysterious man describing distant events as if they were before his eyes, and knowing dead men's secrets, if we are to accept testimony that seemed convincing to Emmanuel Kant. The sailors who carried him upon his many voyages spoke of the charming of the waves and of favour-

ing winds that brought them sooner than ever before to their journey's end, and an ambassador described how a queen, he himself looking on, fainted when Swedenborg whispered in her ear some secret known only to her and to her dead brother. And all this happened to a man without egotism, without drama, without a sense of the picturesque, and who wrote a dry language, lacking fire and emotion, and who to William Blake seemed but an arranger and putter away of the old Church, a Samson shorn by the churches, an author not of a book, but of an index. He considered heaven and hell and God, the angels, the whole destiny of man, as if he were sitting before a large table in a Government office putting little pieces of mineral ore into small square boxes for an assistant to pack away in drawers.

All angels were once men, he says, and it is therefore men who have entered into what he calls the Celestial State and become angels, who attend us immediately after death, and communicate to us their thoughts, not by speaking, but by looking us in the face as they sit beside the head of our body. When they find their thoughts are communicated they know the time has come to separate the spiritual from the physical body. If a man begins to feel that he can endure them no longer, as he doubtless will, for in their presence he can think and feel but sees nothing, lesser angels who belong to truth more than to love take their place and he is in the light again, but in all

likelihood these angels also will be too high and he will slip from state to state until he finds himself after a few days "with those who are in accord with his life in the world; with them he finds his life, and, wonderful to relate, he then leads a life similar to that he led in the world." This first state of shifting and readjustment seems to correspond with a state of sleep more modern seers discover to follow upon death. It is characteristic of his whole religious system, the slow drifting of like to like. Then follows a period which may last but a short time or many years, while the soul lives a life so like that of the world that it may not even believe that it has died, for "when what is spiritual touches and sees what is spiritual the effect is the same as when what is natural touches what is natural." It is the other world of the early races, of those whose dead are in the rath or the faery hill, of all who see no place of reward and punishment but a continuance of this life, with cattle and sheep, markets and war. He describes what he has seen, and only partly explains it, for, unlike science which is founded upon past experience, his work, by the very nature of his gift, looks for the clearing away of obscurities to unrecorded experience. He is revealing something and that which is revealed, so long as it remains modest and simple, has the same right with the child in the cradle to put off to the future the testimony of its worth. This earth-resembling life is the creation of the image-making power of

the mind, plucked naked from the body, and mainly of the images in the memory. All our work has gone with us, the books we have written can be opened and read or put away for later use, even though their print and paper have been sold to the butter-men; and reading his description one notices, a discovery one had thought peculiar to the last generation, that the "most minute particulars which enter the memory remain there and are never obliterated," and there as here we do not always know all that is in our memory, but at need angelic spirits who act upon us there as here, widening and deepening the consciousness at will, can draw forth all the past, and make us live again all our transgressions and see our victims "as if they were present, together with the place, words, and motives"; and that suddenly, "as when a scene bursts upon the sight" and yet continues "for hours together," and like the transgressions, all the pleasure and pain of sensible life awaken again and again, all our passionate events rush up about us and not as seeming imagination, for imagination is now the world. And yet another impulse comes and goes, flitting through all, a preparation for the spiritual abyss, for out of the celestial world, immediately beyond the world of form, fall certain seeds as it were that exfoliate through us into forms, elaborate scenes, buildings, alterations of form that are related by "correspondence" or "signature" to celestial incomprehensible realities. Meanwhile

those who have loved or fought see one another in the unfolding of a dream, believing it may be that they wound one another or kill one another, severing arms or hands, or that their lips are joined in a kiss, and the countryman has need but of Swedenborg's keen ears and eagle sight to hear a noise of swords in the empty valley, or to meet the old master hunting with all his hounds upon the stroke of midnight among the moonlit fields. But gradually we begin to change and possess only those memories we have related to our emotion or our thought; all that was accidental or habitual dies away and we begin an active present life, for apart from that calling up of the past we are not punished or rewarded for our actions when in the world but only for what we do when out of it. Up till now we have disguised our real selves and those who have lived well for fear or favour have walked with holy men and women, and the wise man and the dunce have been associated in common learning, but now the ruling love has begun to remake circumstance and our body.

Swedenborg had spoken with shades that had been learned Latinists, or notable Hebrew scholars, and found, because they had done everything from the memory and nothing from thought and emotion, they had become but simple men. We have already met our friends, but if we were to meet them now for the first time we should not recognize them, for all has been kneaded up anew,

arrayed in order and made one piece. "Every man has many loves, but still they all have reference to his ruling love and make one with it or together compose it," and our surrender to that love, as to supreme good, is no new thought, for Villiers de l'Isle Adam quotes Thomas Aquinas as having said, "Eternity is the possession of one's self, as in a single moment." During the fusing and rending man flits, as it were, from one flock of the dead to another, seeking always those who are like himself, for as he puts off disguise he becomes unable to endure what is unrelated to his love, even becoming insane among things that are too fine for him.

So heaven and hell are built always anew and in hell or heaven all do what they please and all are surrounded by scenes and circumstance which are the expression of their natures and the creation of their thought. Swedenborg because he belongs to an eighteenth century not yet touched by the romantic revival feels horror amid rocky uninhabited places, and so believes that the evil are in such places while the good are amid smooth grass and garden walks and the clear sunlight of Claude Lorraine. He describes all in matter-of-fact words, his meeting with this or that dead man, and the place where he found him, and yet we are not to understand him literally, for space as we know it has come to an end and a difference of state has begun to take its place, and wherever a spirit's thought is, the spirit cannot help but be. Nor

should we think of spirit as divided from spirit, as men are from each other, for they share each other's thoughts and life, and those whom he has called celestial angels, while themselves mediums to those above, commune with men and lower spirits, through orders of mediatorial spirits, not by a conveyance of messages, but as though a hand were thrust within a hundred gloves,[1] one glove outside another, and so there is a continual influx from God to man. It flows to us through the evil angels as through the good, for the dark fire is the perversion of God's life and the evil angels have their office in the equilibrium that is our freedom, in the building of that fabulous bridge made out of the edge of a sword.

To the eyes of those that are in the high heaven "all things laugh, sport, and live," and not merely because they are beautiful things but because they arouse by a minute correspondence of form and emotion the heart's activity, and being founded, as it were, in this changing heart, all things continually change and shimmer. The garments of all befit minutely their affections, those that have most wisdom and most love being the most nobly garmented, in ascending order from shimmering white, through garments of many colours and garments that are like flame, to the angels of the highest heaven that are naked.

[1] The Japanese *Noh* play *Awoi no Uye* has for its theme the exorcism of a ghost which is itself obsessed by an evil spirit. This evil spirit, drawn forth by the exorcism, is represented by a dancer wearing a "terrible mask with golden eyes."

In the west of Ireland the country people say that after death every man grows upward or downward to the likeness of thirty years, perhaps because at that age Christ began his ministry, and stays always in that likeness; and these angels move always towards "the springtime of their life" and grow more and more beautiful, "the more thousand years they live," and women who have died infirm with age, and yet lived in faith and charity, and true love towards husband or lover, come "after a succession of years" to an adolescence that was not in Helen's Mirror, "for to grow old in heaven is to grow young."

There went on about Swedenborg an intermittent "Battle of the Friends" and on certain occasions had not the good fought upon his side, the evil troop, by some carriage accident or the like, would have caused his death, for all associations of good spirits have an answering mob, whose members grow more hateful to look on through the centuries. "Their faces in general are horrible, and empty of life like corpses, those of some are black, of some fiery like torches, of some hideous with pimples, boils, and ulcers; with many no face appears, but in its place a something hairy or bony, and in some one can but see the teeth." And yet among themselves they are seeming men and but show their right appearance when the light of heaven, which of all things they most dread, beats upon them [illegible] seem to live in a malignant gaiety, and th[illegible]

always in a fire that is God's love and wisdom, changed into their own hunger and misbelief.

III

In Lady Gregory's stories there is a man who heard the newly dropped lambs of faery crying in November, and much evidence to show a topsy-turvydom of seasons, our spring being their autumn, our winter their summer, and Mary Battle, my Uncle George Pollexfen's old servant, was accustomed to say that no dream had a true meaning after the rise of the sap; and Lady Gregory learned somewhere on Sleive Ochta that if one told one's dreams to the trees fasting the trees would wither. Swedenborg saw some like opposition of the worlds, for what hides the spirits from our sight and touch, as he explains, is that their light and heat are darkness and cold to us and our light and heat darkness and cold to them, but they can see the world through our eyes and so make our light their light. He seems however to warn us against a movement whose philosophy he announced or created, when he tells us to seek no conscious intercourse with any that fall short of the celestial rank. At ordinary times they do not see us or know that we are near, but when we speak to them we are in danger of their deceits. "They have a passion for inventing," and do not always know that they invent. "It has been shown me many times that the spirits speaking with me di

not know but that they were the men and women I was thinking of; neither did other spirits know the contrary. Thus yesterday and today one known of me in life was personated. The personation was so like him in all respects, so far as known to me, that nothing could be more like. For there are genera and species of spirits of similar faculty (? as the dead whom we seek), and when like things are called up in the memory of men and so are represented to them they think they are the same persons. At other times they enter into the fantasy of other spirits and think that they are them, and sometimes they will even believe themselves to be the Holy Spirit," and as they identify themselves with a man's affection or enthusiasm they may drive him to ruin, and even an angel will join himself so completely to a man that he scarcely knows "that he does not know of himself what the man knows," and when they speak with a man they can but speak in that man's mother tongue, and this they can do without taking thought, for "it is almost as when a man is speaking and thinks nothing about his words." Yet when they leave the man "they are in their own angelical or spiritual language and know nothing of the language of the man." They are not even permitted to talk to a man from their own memory for did they do so the man would not know "but that the things he would then think were his own yet they would belong to the spirit," and it is these sudden memories occurring sometimes by

accident, and without God's permission that gave the Greeks the idea they had lived before. They have bodies as plastic as their minds that flow so readily into the mould of ours and he remembers having seen the face of a spirit change continuously and yet keep always a certain generic likeness. It had but run through the features of the individual ghosts of the fleet it belonged to, of those bound into the one mediatorial communion.

He speaks too, again and again, of seeing palaces and mountain ranges and all manner of scenery built up in a moment, and even believes in imponderable troops of magicians that build the like out of some deceit or in malicious sport.

IV

There is in Swedenborg's manner of expression a seeming superficiality. We follow an easy narrative, sometimes incredulous, but always, as we think, understanding, for his moral conceptions are simple, his technical terms continually repeated, and for the most part we need but turn for his "correspondence," his symbolism as we would say, to the index of his *Arcana Celestia*. Presently, however, we discover that he treads upon this surface by an achievement of power almost as full of astonishment as if he should walk upon water charmed to stillness by some halcyon; while his disciple and antagonist Blake is like a man swimming in a tumbling sea, surface giving way to sur-

face and deep showing under broken deep. A later mystic has said of Swedenborg that he but half felt, half saw, half tasted the kingdom of heaven, and his abstraction, his dryness, his habit of seeing but one element in everything, his lack of moral speculation have made him the founder of a church, while William Blake, who grows always more exciting with every year of life, grows also more obscure. An impulse towards what is definite and sensuous, and an indifference towards the abstract and the general, are the lineaments, as I understand the world, of all that comes not from the learned, but out of common antiquity, out of the "folk" as we say, and in certain languages, Irish for instance—and these languages are all poetry—it is not possible to speak an abstract thought. This impulse went out of Swedenborg when he turned from vision. It was inseparable from this primitive faculty, but was not a part of his daily bread, whereas Blake carried it to a passion and made it the foundation of his thought. Blake was put into a rage by all painting where detail is generalized away, and complained that Englishmen after the French Revolution became as like one another as the dots and lozenges in the mechanical engraving of his time, and he hated histories that gave us reasoning and deduction in place of the events, and St. Paul's Cathedral because it came from a mathematical mind, and told Crabb Robinson that he preferred to any others a happy, thoughtless person. Unlike Swed-

enborg he believed that the antiquities of all peoples were as sacred as those of the Jews, and so rejecting authority and claiming that the same law for the lion and the ox was oppression, he could believe "all that lives is holy," and say that a man if he but cultivated the power of vision would see the truth in a way suited "to his imaginative energy," and with only so much resemblance to the way it showed in for other men, as there is between different human forms. Born when Swedenborg was a new excitement, growing up with a Swedenborgian brother, who annoyed him "with bread and cheese advice," and having, it may be, for nearest friend the Swedenborgian Flaxman with whom he would presently quarrel, he answered the just translated *Heaven and Hell* with the paradoxical violence of *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell.* Swedenborg was but "the linen clothes folded up" or the angel sitting by the tomb, after Christ, the human imagination, had arisen. His own memory being full of images from painting and from poetry he discovered more profound "correspondences," yet always in his boys and girls walking or dancing on smooth grass and in golden light, as in pastoral scenes cut upon wood or copper by his disciples Palmer and Calvert one notices the peaceful Swedenborgian heaven. We come there, however, by no obedience but by the energy that "is eternal delight," for "the treasures of heaven are not negations of passion but realities of intellect from which the passions emanate

uncurbed in their eternal glory." He would have us talk no more "of the good man and the bad," but only of "the wise man and the foolish," and he cries, "Go put off holiness and put on intellect."

Higher than all souls that seem to theology to have found a final state, above good and evil, neither accused, nor yet accusing, live those, who have come to freedom, their senses sharpened by eternity, piping or dancing or "like the gay fishes on the wave when the moon sucks up the dew." Merlin, who in the verses of Chrétien de Troyes was laid in the one tomb with dead lovers, is very near and the saints are far away. Believing too that crucifixion and resurrection were the soul's diary and no mere historical events, which had been transacted in vain should a man come again from the womb and forget his salvation, he could cleave to the heroic doctrine the angel in the crystal made Sir Thomas Kelly renounce and have a "vague memory" of having been "with Christ and Socrates"; and stirred as deeply by hill and tree as by human beauty, he saw all Merlin's people, spirits "of vegetable nature" and fairies whom we "call accident and chance." He made possible a religious life to those who had seen the painters and poets of the romantic movement succeed to theology, but the shepherd and the midwife had they known him would have celebrated him in stories, and turned away from his thought, understanding that he was upon an errand to their masters. Like Swedenborg he

believed that heaven came from "an improvement of sensual enjoyment," for sight and hearing, taste and touch grow with the angelic years, but unlike him he could convey to others "enlarged and numerous senses," and the mass of men know instinctively they are safer with an abstract and an index.

V

It was, I believe, the Frenchman Allen Cardec and an American shoemaker's clerk called Jackson Davis, who first adapted to the séance room the philosophy of Swedenborg. I find Davis whose style is vague, voluble, and pretentious, almost unreadable, and yet his books have gone to many editions and are full of stories that had been charming or exciting had he lived in Connaught or any place else, where the general mass of the people has an imaginative tongue. His mother was learned in country superstition, and had called in a knowledgeable man when she believed a neighbour had bewitched a cow, but it was not till his fifteenth year that he discovered his faculty, when his native village, Poughkeepsie, was visited by a travelling mesmerist. He was fascinated by the new marvel, and mesmerized by a neighbour he became clairvoyant, describing the diseases of those present and reading watches he could not see with his eyes. One night the neighbour failed to awake him completely from

the trance and he stumbled out into the street and went to his bed ill and stupefied. In the middle of the night he heard a voice telling him to get up and dress himself and follow. He wandered for miles, now wondering at what seemed the unusual brightness of the stars and once passing a visionary shepherd and his flock of sheep, and then again stumbling in cold and darkness. He crossed the frozen Hudson and became unconscious. He awoke in a mountain valley to see once more the visionary shepherd and his flock, and a very little, handsome, old man who showed him a scroll and told him to write his name upon it.

A little later he passed, as he believed, from this mesmeric condition and found that he was among the Catskill Mountains and more than forty miles from home. Having crossed the Hudson again he felt the trance coming upon him and began to run. He ran, as he thought, many miles and as he ran became unconscious. When he awoke he was sitting upon a gravestone in a graveyard surrounded by a wood and a high wall. Many of the gravestones were old and broken. After much conversation with two stately phantoms, he went stumbling on his way. Presently he found himself at home again. It was evening and the mesmerist was questioning him as to where he had been since they lost him the night before. He was very hungry and had a vague memory of his return, of country roads passing before his eyes in brief moments of wakefulness. He now seemed

to know that one of the phantoms with whom he had spoken in the graveyard was the physician Galen, and the other, Swedenborg.

From that hour the two phantoms came to him again and again, the one advising him in the diagnosis of disease, and the other in philosophy. He quoted a passage from Swedenborg, and it seemed impossible that any copy of the newly translated book that contained it could have come into his hands, for a Swedenborgian minister in New York traced every copy which had reached America.

Swedenborg himself had gone upon more than one somnambulistic journey, and they occur a number of times in Lady Gregory's stories, one woman saying that when she was among the faeries she was often glad to eat the food from the pigs' troughs.

Once in childhood, Davis, while hurrying home through a wood, heard footsteps behind him and began to run, but the footsteps, though they did not seem to come more quickly and were still the regular pace of a man walking, came nearer. Presently he saw an old, white-haired man beside him who said: "You cannot run away from life," and asked him where he was going. "I am going home," he said, and the phantom answered, "I also am going home," and then vanished. Twice in later childhood, and a third time when he had grown to be a young man, he was overtaken by the same phantom and the same words

were spoken, but the last time he asked why it had vanished so suddenly. It said that it had not, but that he had supposed that "changes of state" in himself were "appearance and disappearance." It then touched him with one finger upon the side of his head, and the place where he was touched remained ever after without feeling, like those places always searched for at the witches' trials. One remembers "the touch" and "the stroke" in the Irish stories.

VI

Allen Cardec, whose books are much more readable than those of Davis, had himself no mediumistic gifts. He gathered the opinions, as he believed, of spirits speaking through a great number of automatists and trance speakers, and all the essential thought of Swedenborg remains, but like Davis, these spirits do not believe in an eternal Hell, and like Blake they describe unhuman races, powers of the elements, and declare that the soul is no creature of the womb, having lived many lives upon the earth. The sorrow of death, they tell us again and again, is not so bitter as the sorrow of birth, and had our ears the subtlety we could listen amid the joy of lovers and the pleasure that comes with sleep to the wailing of the spirit betrayed into a cradle. Who was it that wrote: "O Pythagoras, so good, so wise, so eloquent, upon my last voyage, I taught thee, a soft lad, to splice a rope"?

This belief, common among continental spiritists, is denied by those of England and America, and if one question the voices at a séance they take sides according to the medium's nationality. I have even heard what professed to be the shade of an old English naval officer denying it with a fine phrase: "I did not leave my oars crossed; I left them side by side."

VII

Much as a hashish eater will discover in the folds of a curtain a figure beautifully drawn and full of delicate detail all built up out of shadows that show to other eyes, or later to his own, a different form or none, Swedenborg discovered in the Bible the personal symbolism of his vision. If the Bible was upon his side, as it seemed, he had no need of other evidence, but had he lived when modern criticism had lessened its authority, even had he been compelled to say that the primitive beliefs of all peoples were as sacred, he could but have run to his own gift for evidence. He might even have held of some importance his powers of discovering the personal secrets of the dead and set up as medium. Yet it is more likely he had refused, for the medium has his gift from no heightening of all the emotions and intellectual faculties till they seem as it were to take fire, but commonly because they are altogether or in part extinguished while another mind controls his body.

He is greatly subject to trance and awakes to remember nothing, whereas the mystic and the saint plead unbroken consciousness. Indeed the author of *Sidonia the Sorceress*, a really learned authority, considered this lack of memory a certain sign of possession by the devil, though this is too absolute. Only yesterday, while walking in a field, I made up a good sentence with an emotion of triumph, and half a minute after could not even remember what it was about, and several minutes had gone by before I as suddenly found it. For the most part, though not always, it is this unconscious condition of mediumship, a dangerous condition it may be, that seems to make possible "physical phenomena" and that overshadowing of the memory by some spirit memory, which Swedenborg thought an accident and unlawful.

In describing and explaining this mediumship and so making intelligible the stories of Aran and Galway I shall say very seldom, "it is said," or "Mr. So-and-So reports," or "it is claimed by the best authors." I shall write as if what I describe were everywhere established, everywhere accepted, and I had only to remind my reader of what he already knows. Even if incredulous he will give me his fancy for certain minutes, for at the worst I can show him a gorgon or chimera that has never lacked gazers, alleging nothing (and I do not write out of a little knowledge) that is not among the sober beliefs of many men, or

obvious inference from those beliefs, and if he wants more—well, he will find it in the best authors.[1]

VIII

All spirits for some time after death, and the "earth-bound," as they are called, the larvæ, as Beaumont, the seventeenth-century Platonist, preferred to call them, those who cannot become disentangled from old habits and desires, for many years, it may be for centuries, keep the shape of their earthly bodies and carry on their old activities, wooing or quarrelling, or totting figures on a table, in a round of dull duties or passionate events. Today while the great battle in Northern France is still undecided, should I climb to the top of that old house in Soho where a medium is sitting among servant girls, some one would, it may be, ask for news of Gordon Highlander or Munster Fusilier, and the fat old woman would tell in Cockney language how the dead do not yet know they are dead, but stumble on amid visionary smoke and noise, and how

[1] Besides the well-known books of Atsikof, Myers, Lodge, Flammarion, Flournoy, Maxwell, Albert De Rochas, Lombroso, Madame Bisson, Delanne, etc., I have made considerable use of the researches of D'Ochorowicz published during the last ten or twelve years in *Annales des Science Psychiques* and in the English *Annals of Psychical Science*, and of those of Professor Hyslop published during the last four years in the *Journal* and *Transactions of the American Society for Psychical Research*. I have myself been a somewhat active investigator.

angelic spirits seek to awaken them but still in vain.

Those who have attained to nobler form, when they appear in the séance room, create temporary bodies, commonly like to those they wore when living, through some unconscious constraint of memory, or deliberately, that they may be recognized. Davis, in his literal way, said the first sixty feet of the atmosphere was a reflector and that in almost every case it was mere images we spoke with in the séance room, the spirit itself being far away. The images are made of a substance drawn from the medium who loses weight, and in a less degree from all present, and for this light must be extinguished or dimmed or shaded with red as in a photographer's room. The image will begin outside the medium's body as a luminous cloud, or in a sort of luminous mud forced from the body, out of the mouth it may be, from the side or from the lower parts of the body.[1] One may see a vague cloud condense and diminish into a head or arm or a whole figure of a man, or to some animal shape.

I remember a story told me by a friend's steward

[1] Henry More considered that "the animal spirits" were "the immediate instruments of the soul in all vital and animal functions" and quotes Harpocrates, who was contemporary with Plato, as saying, "that the mind of man is . . . not nourished from meats and drinks from the belly but by a clear and luminous substance that redounds by separation from the blood." Ochorowicz thought that certain small oval lights were perhaps the root of personality itself.

in Galway of the faeries playing at hurley in a field and going in and out of the bodies of two men who stood at either goal. Out of the medium will come perhaps a cripple or a man bent with years and sometimes the apparition will explain that, but for some family portrait, or for what it lit on while rumaging in our memories, it had not remembered its customary clothes or features, or cough or limp or crutch. Sometimes, indeed, there is a strange regularity of feature and we suspect the presence of an image that may never have lived, an artificial beauty that may have shown itself in the Greek mysteries. Has some cast in the Vatican, or at Bloomsbury been the model? Or there may float before our eyes a mask as strange and powerful as the lineaments of the Servian's *Frowning Man* or of Rodin's *Man with the Broken Nose.* And once a rumour ran among the séance rooms to the bewilderment of simple believers, that a heavy middle-aged man who took snuff, and wore the costume of a past time, had appeared while a French medium was in his trance, and somebody had recognized the Tartuffe of the Comédie Française. There will be few complete forms, for the dead are economical, and a head, or just enough of the body for recognition, may show itself above hanging folds of drapery that do not seem to cover solid limbs, or a hand or foot is lacking, or it may be that some *Revenant* has seized the half-made image of another, and a young girl's arm will be thrust from the withered body of

an old man. Nor is every form a breathing and pulsing thing, for some may have a distribution of light and shade not that of the séance room, flat pictures whose eyes gleam and move; and sometimes material objects are thrown together (drifted in from some neighbour's wardrobe, it may be, and drifted thither again) and an appearance kneaded up out of these and that luminous mud or vapour almost as vivid as are those pictures of Antonio Mancini which have fragments of his paint tubes embedded for the high lights into the heavy masses of the paint. Sometimes there are animals, bears frequently for some unknown reason, but most often birds and dogs. If an image speak it will seldom seem very able or alert, for they come for recognition only, and their minds are strained and fragmentary; and should the dogs bark, a man who knows the language of our dogs may not be able to say if they are hungry or afraid or glad to meet their master again. All may seem histrionic or a hollow show. We are the spectators of a phantasmagoria that affects the photographic plate or leaves its moulded image in a preparation of paraffin. We have come to understand why the Platonists of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and visionaries like Boehme and Paracelsus confused imagination with magic, and why Boehme will have it that it "creates and substantiates as it goes."

Most commonly, however, especially of recent years, no form will show itself, or but vaguely and

faintly and in no way ponderable, and instead there will be voices flitting here and there in darkness, or in the half-light, or it will be the medium himself fallen into trance who will speak, or without a trance write from a knowledge and intelligence not his own. Glanvil, the seventeenth-century Platonist, said that the higher spirits were those least capable of showing material effects, and it seems plain from certain Polish experiments that the intelligence of the communicators increases with their economy of substance and energy. Often now among these faint effects one will seem to speak with the very dead. They will speak or write some tongue that the medium does not know and give correctly their forgotten names, or describe events one only verifies after weeks of labour. Here and there amongst them one discovers a wise and benevolent mind that knows a little of the future and can give good advice. They have made, one imagines, from some finer substance than a phosphorescent mud, or cobweb vapour that we can see or handle, images not wholly different from themselves, figures in a galanty show not too strained or too extravagant to speak their very thought.

Yet we never long escape the phantasmagoria nor can long forget that we are among the shape-changers. Sometimes our own minds shape that mysterious substance, which may be life itself, according to desire or constrained by memory, and the dead no longer remembering their own names

become the characters in the drama we ourselves have invented. John King, who has delighted melodramatic minds for hundreds of séances with his career on earth as Henry Morgan the buccaneer, will tell more scientific visitors that he is merely a force, while some phantom long accustomed to a decent name, questioned by some pious Catholic, will admit very cheerfully that he is the devil. Nor is it only present minds that perplex the shades with phantasy, for friends of Count Albert de Rochas once wrote out names and incidents but to discover that though the surname of the shade that spoke had been historical, Christian name and incidents were from a romance running at the time in some clerical newspaper no one there had ever opened.

All these shadows have drunk from the pool of blood and become delirious. Sometimes they will use the very word and say that we force delirium upon them because we do not still our minds, or that minds not stupefied with the body force them more subtly, for now and again one will withdraw what he has said, saying that he was constrained by the neighbourhood of some more powerful shade.

When I was a boy at Sligo, a stable boy met his late master going round the yard, and having told him to go and haunt the lighthouse, was dismissed by his mistress for sending her husband to haunt so inclement a spot. Ghosts, I was told, must go where they are bid, and all those threaten-

ings by the old *grimoires* to drown some disobedient spirit at the bottom of the Red Sea, and indeed all exorcism and conjuration affirm that our imagination is king. *Revenants* are, to use the modern term, "suggestable," and may be studied in the "trance personalities" of hypnoses and in our dreams which are but hypnosis turned inside out, a modeller's clay for our suggestions, or, if we follow *The Spiritual Diary*, for those of invisible beings. Swedenborg has written that we are each in the midst of a group of associated spirits who sleep when we sleep and become the *dramatis personæ* of our dreams, and are always the other will that wrestles with our thought, shaping it to our despite.

IX

We speak, it may be, of the Proteus of antiquity which has to be held or it will refuse its prophecy, and there are many warnings in our ears. "Stoop not down," says the Chaldæan Oracle, "to the darkly splendid world wherein continually lieth a faithless depth and Hades wrapped in cloud, delighting in unintelligible images," and amid that caprice, among those clouds, there is always legerdemain; we juggle, or lose our money with the same pack of cards that may reveal the future. The magicians who astonished the Middle Ages with power as incalculable as the fall of a meteor were not so numerous as the more amusing jugglers

who could do their marvels at will; and in our own day the juggler Houdin, sent to Morocco by the French Government, was able to break the prestige of the dervishes whose fragile wonders were but worked by fasting and prayer.

Sometimes, indeed, a man would be magician, jester, and juggler. In an Irish story a stranger lays three rushes upon the flat of his hand and promises to blow away the inner and leave the others unmoved, and thereupon puts two fingers of his other hand upon the outer ones and blows. However, he will do a more wonderful trick. There are many who can wag both ears, but he can wag one and not the other, and thereafter, when he has everybody's attention, he takes one ear between finger and thumb. But now that the audience are friendly and laughing the moment of miracle has come. He takes out of a bag a skein of silk thread and throws it into the air, until it seems as though one end were made fast to a cloud. Then he takes out of his bag first a hare and then a dog and then a young man and then "a beautiful, well-dressed young woman" and sends them all running up the thread. Nor, the old writers tell us, does the association of juggler and magician cease after death, which only gives to legerdemain greater power and subtlety. Those who would live again in us, becoming a part of our thoughts and passion have, it seems, their sport to keep us in good humour, and a young girl who has astonished herself and her friends in

some dark séance may, when we have persuaded her to become entranced in a lighted room, tell us that some shade is touching her face, while we can see her touching it with her own hand, or we may discover her, while her eyes are still closed, in some jugglery that implies an incredible mastery of muscular movement. Perhaps too in the fragmentary middle world there are souls that remain always upon the brink, always children. Dr. Ochorowicz finds his experiments upset by a naked girl, one foot one inch high, who is constantly visible to his medium and who claims never to have lived upon the earth. He has photographed her by leaving a camera in an empty room where she had promised to show herself, but is so doubtful of her honesty that he is not sure she did not hold up a print from an illustrated paper in front of the camera. In one of Lady Gregory's stories a countryman is given by a stranger he meets upon the road what seems wholesome and pleasant food, but a little later his stomach turns and he finds that he has eaten chopped grass, and one remembers Robin Goodfellow and his joint stool, and witches' gold that is but dried cow dung. It is only, one does not doubt, because of our preoccupation with a single problem, our survival of the body, and with the affection that binds us to the dead, that all the gnomes and nymphs of antiquity have not begun their tricks again.

X

Plutarch, in his essay on the dæmon, describes how the souls of enlightened men return to be the schoolmasters of the living, whom they influence unseen; and the mediums, should we ask how they escape the illusions of that world, claim the protection of their guides. One will tell you that when she was a little girl she was minding geese upon some American farm and an old man came towards her with a queer coat upon him, and how at first she took him for a living man. He said perhaps a few words of pious commonplace or practical advice and vanished. He had come again and again, and now that she has to earn her living by her gift, he warns her against deceiving spirits, or if she is working too hard, but sometimes she will not listen and gets into trouble. The old witch doctor of Lady Gregory's story learned his cures from his dead sister whom he met from time to time, but especially at Hallowe'en, at the end of the garden, but he had other helpers harsher than she, and once he was beaten for disobedience.

Reginald Scott gives a fine plan for picking a guide. You promise some dying man to pray for the repose of his soul if he will but come to you after death and give what help you need, while stories of mothers who come at night to be among their orphan children are as common among spiritists as in Galway or in Mayo. A French servant girl once said to a friend of mine who

helped her in some love affair: "You have your studies, we have only our affections"; and this I think is why the walls are broken less often among us than among the poor. Yet according to the doctrine of Soho and Holloway and in Plutarch, those studies that have lessened in us the sap of the world may bring to us good, learned, masterful men who return to see their own or some like work carried to a finish. "I do think," wrote Sir Thomas Browne, "that many mysteries ascribed to our own invention have been the courteous revelations of spirits; for those noble essences in heaven bear a friendly regard unto their fellow creatures on earth."

XI

Much that Lady Gregory has gathered seems but the broken bread of old philosophers, or else of the one sort with the dough they made into their loaves. Were I not ignorant, my Greek gone and my meagre Latin all but gone, I do not doubt that I could find much to the point in Greek, perhaps in old writers on medicine, much in Renaissance or Medieval Latin. As it is, I must be content with what has been translated or with the seventeenth-century Platonists who are the handier for my purpose because they found in the affidavits and confessions of the witch trials, descriptions like those in our Connaught stories. I have Henry More in his verse and in his prose

and I have Henry More's two friends, Joseph Glanvil, and Cudworth in his *Intellectual System of the Universe*, three volumes violently annotated by an opposed theologian; and two essays by Mr. G. R. S. Meade clipped out of his magazine, *The Quest*. These writers quote much from Plotinus and Porphyry and Plato and from later writers, especially Synesius and John Philoponus in whom the School of Plato came to an end in the seventh century.

We should not suppose that our souls began at birth, for as Henry More has said, a man might as well think "from souls new souls" to bring as "to press the sunbeams in his fist" or "wring the rainbow till it dye his hands." We have within us an "airy body" or "spirit body" which was our only body before our birth as it will be again when we are dead and its "plastic power" has shaped our terrestrial body as some day it may shape apparition and ghost. Porphyry is quoted by Mr. Meade as saying that "Souls who love the body attach a moist spirit to them and condense it like a cloud," and so become visible, and so are all apparitions of the dead made visible; though necromancers, according to Henry More, can ease and quicken this condensation "with reek of oil, meal, milk, and such like gear, wine, water, honey." One remembers that Dr. Ochorowicz's naked imp once described how she filled out an appearance of herself by putting a piece of blotting paper where her stomach should have been and

that the blotting paper became damp because, as she said, a materialization, until it is completed, is a damp vapour. This airy body which so compresses vapour, Philoponus says, "takes the shape of the physical body as water takes the shape of the vessel that it has been frozen in," but it is capable of endless transformations, for "in itself it has no especial form," but Henry More believes that it has an especial form, for "its plastic power" cannot but find the human form most "natural," though "vehemency of desire to alter the figure into another representation may make the appearance to resemble some other creature; but no forced thing can last long." "The better genii" therefore prefer to show "in a human shape yet not it may be with all the lineaments" but with such as are "fit for this separate state" (separate from the body that is) or are "requisite to perfect the visible features of a person," desire and imagination adding clothes and ornament. The materialization, as we would say, has but enough likeness for recognition. It may be that More but copies Philoponus who thought the shade's habitual form, the image that it was as it were frozen in for a time, could be again "coloured and shaped by fantasy," and that "it is probable that when the soul desires to manifest it shapes itself, setting its own imagination in movement, or even that it is probable with the help of dæmonic co-operation that it appears and again becomes invisible, becoming condensed and rarefied." Porphyry, Phil-

oponus adds, gives Homer as his authority for the belief that souls after death live among images of their experience upon earth, phantasms impressed upon the spirit body. While Synesius, who lived at the end of the fourth century and had Hypatia among his friends, also describes the spirit body as capable of taking any form and so of enabling us after death to work out our purgation; and says that for this reason the oracles have likened the state after death to the images of a dream. The seventeenth century English translation of Cornelius Agrippa's *De Occulta Philosophia* was once so famous that it found its way into the hands of Irish farmers and wandering Irish tinkers, and it may be that Agrippa influenced the common thought when he wrote that the evil dead see represented "in the fantastic reason" those shapes of life that are "the more turbulent and furious . . . sometimes of the heavens falling upon their heads, sometimes of their being consumed with the violence of flames, sometimes of being drowned in a gulf, sometimes of being swallowed up in the earth, sometimes of being changed into divers kinds of beasts . . . and sometimes of being taken and tormented by demons . . . as if they were in a dream." The ancients, he writes, have called these souls "hobgoblins," and Orpheus has called them "the people of dreams" saying "the gates of Pluto cannot be unlocked; within is a people of dreams." They are a dream indeed that has place and weight and measure, and seeing that their bodies are of an

actual air, they cannot, it was held, but travel in wind and set the straws and the dust twirling; though being of the wind's weight they need not, Dr. Henry More considers, so much as feel its ruffling, or if they should do so, they can shelter in a house or behind a wall, or gather into themselves as it were, out of the gross wind and vapour. But there are good dreams among the airy people, though we cannot properly name that a dream which is but analogical of the deep unimaginable virtues and has, therefore, stability and a common measure. Henry More stays himself in the midst of the dry learned and abstract writing of his treatise *The Immortality of the Soul* to praise "their comely carriage . . . their graceful dancing, their melodious singing and playing with an accent so sweet and soft as if we should imagine air itself to compose lessons and send forth musical sounds without the help of any terrestrial instrument" and imagines them at their revels in the thin upper air where the earth can but seem "a fleecy and milky light" as the moon to us, and he cries out that they "sing and play and dance together, reaping the lawful pleasures of the very animal life, in a far higher degree than we are capable of in this world, for everything here does, as it were, taste of the cask and has some measure of foulness in it."

There is, however, another birth or death when we pass from the airy to the shining or ethereal body, and "in the airy the soul may inhabit for

many ages and in the ethereal for ever," and indeed it is the ethereal body which is the root "of all that natural warmth in all generations" though in us it can no longer shine. It lives while in its true condition an unimaginable life and is sometimes described as of "a round or oval figure" and as always circling among gods and among the stars, and sometimes as having more dimensions than our penury can comprehend.

Last winter Mr. Ezra Pound was editing the late Professor Fenollosa's translations of the Noh Drama of Japan, and read me a great deal of what he was doing. Nearly all that my fat old woman in Soho learns from her familiars is there in an unsurpassed lyric poetry and in strange and poignant fables once danced or sung in the houses of nobles. In one a priest asks his way of some girls who are gathering herbs. He asks if it is a long road to town; and the girls begin to lament over their hard lot gathering cress in a cold wet bog where they sink up to their knees and to compare themselves with ladies in the big town who only pull the cress in sport, and need not when the cold wind is flapping their sleeves. He asks what village he has come to and if a road near by leads to the village of Ono. A girl replies that nobody can know that name without knowing the road, and another says: "Who would not know that name, written on so many pictures, and know the pine trees they are always drawing." Presently the cold drives away all the girls but one

and she tells the priest she is a spirit and has taken solid form that she may speak with him and ask his help. It is her tomb that has made Ono so famous. Conscience-struck at having allowed two young men to fall in love with her she refused to choose between them. Her father said he would give her to the best archer. At the match to settle it both sent their arrows through the same wing of a mallard and were declared equal. She being ashamed and miserable because she had caused so much trouble and for the death of the mallard, took her own life. That, she thought, would end the trouble, but her lovers killed themselves beside her tomb, and now she suffered all manner of horrible punishments. She had but to lay her hand upon a pillar to make it burst into flame; she was perpetually burning. The priest tells her that if she can but cease to believe in her punishments they will cease to exist. She listens in gratitude but she cannot cease to believe, and while she is speaking they come upon her and she rushes away enfolded in flames. Her imagination has created all those terrors out of a scruple, and one remembers how Lake Harris, who led Laurence Oliphant such a dance, once said to a shade, "How did you know you were damned?" and that it answered, "I saw my own thoughts going past me like blazing ships."

In a play still more rich in lyric poetry a priest is wandering in a certain ancient village. He describes the journey and the scene, and from time

to time the chorus sitting at the side of the stage sings its comment. He meets with two ghosts, the one holding a red stick, the other a piece of coarse cloth and both dressed in the fashion of a past age, but as he is a stranger he supposes them villagers wearing the village fashion. They sing as if muttering, "We are entangled up—whose fault was it, dear? Tangled up as the grass patterns are tangled up in this coarse cloth, or that insect which lives and chirrups in dried seaweed. We do not know where are today our tears in the undergrowth of this eternal wilderness. We neither wake nor sleep and passing our nights in sorrow, which is in the end a vision, what are these scenes of spring to us? This thinking in sleep for some one who has no thought for you, is it more than a dream? And yet surely it is the natural way of love. In our hearts there is much, and in our bodies nothing, and we do nothing at all, and only the waters of the river of tears flow quickly." To the priest they seem two married people, but he cannot understand why they carry the red stick and the coarse cloth. They ask him to listen to a story. Two young people had lived in that village long ago and night after night for three years the young man had offered a charmed red stick, the token of love, at the young girl's window, but she pretended not to see and went on weaving. So the young man died and was buried in a cave with his charmed red sticks, and presently the girl died too, and now because they were never married in life

they were unmarried in their death. The priest, who does not yet understand that it is their own tale, asks to be shown the cave, and says it will be a fine tale to tell when he goes home. The chorus describes the journey to the cave. The lovers go in front, the priest follows. They are all day pushing through long grasses that hide the narrow paths. They ask the way of a farmer who is mowing. Then night falls and it is cold and frosty. It is stormy and the leaves are falling and their feet sink into the muddy places made by the autumn showers; there is a long shadow on the slope of the mountain, and an owl in the ivy of the pine tree. They have found the cave and it is dyed with the red sticks of love to the colour of "the orchids and chrysanthemums which hide the mouth of a fox's hole"; and now the two lovers have "slipped into the shadow of the cave." Left alone and too cold to sleep the priest decides to spend the night in prayer. He prays that the lovers may at last be one. Presently he sees to his wonder that the cave is lighted up "where people are talking and setting up looms for spinning and painted red sticks." The ghosts creep out and thank him for his prayer and say that through his pity "the love promises of long past incarnations" find fulfilment in a dream. Then he sees the love story unfolded in a vision and the chorus compares the sound of weaving to the clicking of crickets. A little later he is shown the bridal room and the lovers drinking from the bridal cup. The dawn is

coming. It is reflected in the bridal cup and now singers, cloth, and stick break and dissolve like a dream, and there is nothing but "a deserted grave on a hill where morning winds are blowing through the pine."

I remember that Aran story of the lovers who came after death to the priest for marriage. It is not uncommon for a ghost, "a control" as we say, to come to a medium to discover some old earthly link to fit into a new chain. It wishes to meet a ghostly enemy to win pardon or to renew an old friendship. Our service to the dead is not narrowed to our prayers, but may be as wide as our imagination. I have known a control to warn a medium to unsay her promise to an old man, to whom, that she might be rid of him, she had promised herself after death. What is promised here in our loves or in a witch's bond may be fulfilled in a life which is a dream. If our terrestrial condition is, as it seems the territory of choice and of cause, the one ground for all seed sowing, it is plain why our imagination has command over the dead and why they must keep from sight and earshot. At the British Museum at the end of the Egyptian Room and near the stairs are two statues, one an august decoration, one a most accurate looking naturalistic portrait. The august decoration was for a public site, the other, like all the naturalistic art of the epoch, for burial beside a mummy. So buried it was believed, the Egyptologists tell us, to be of service to the dead. I have no doubt it helped a

dead man to build out of his spirit-body a recognizable apparition, and that all boats or horses or weapons or their models buried in ancient tombs were helps for a flagging memory or a too weak fancy to imagine and so substantiate the old surroundings. A shepherd at Doneraile told me some years ago of an aunt of his who showed herself after death stark naked and bid her relatives to make clothes and to give them to a beggar, the while remembering her.[1] Presently she appeared again wearing the clothes and thanked them.

XII

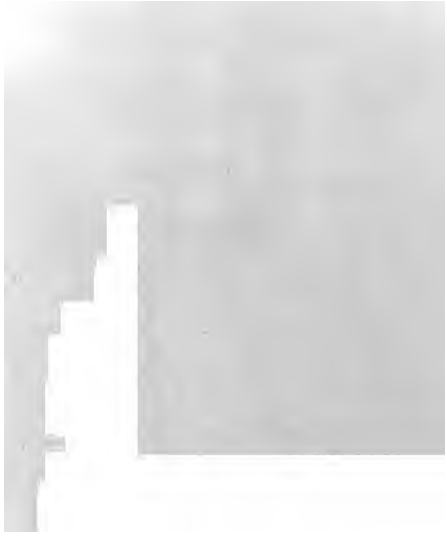
Certainly in most writings before our time the body of an apparition was held for a brief, artificial, dreamy, half-living thing. One is always meeting such phrases as Sir Thomas Browne's "they steal or contrive a body." A passage in the *Paradiso* comes to mind describing Dante in conversation with the blessed among their spheres, although they are but in appearance there, being in truth in the petals of the yellow rose; and another in the Odyssey where Odysseus speaks not with "the mighty Heracles," but with his phantom, for he himself "hath joy at the banquet among the deathless gods and hath to wife Hebe of the fair ankles,

[1] Herodotus has an equivalent tale. Periander, because the ghost of his wife complained that it was "cold and naked," got the women of Corinth together in their best clothes and had them stripped and their clothes burned.

child of Zeus, and Hero of the golden sandals," while all about the phantom "there was a clamour of the dead, as it were fowls flying everywhere in fear and he, like black night with bow uncased, and shaft upon the string, fiercely glancing around like one in the act to shoot."

W. B. Y.

14th October, 1914.



NOTES

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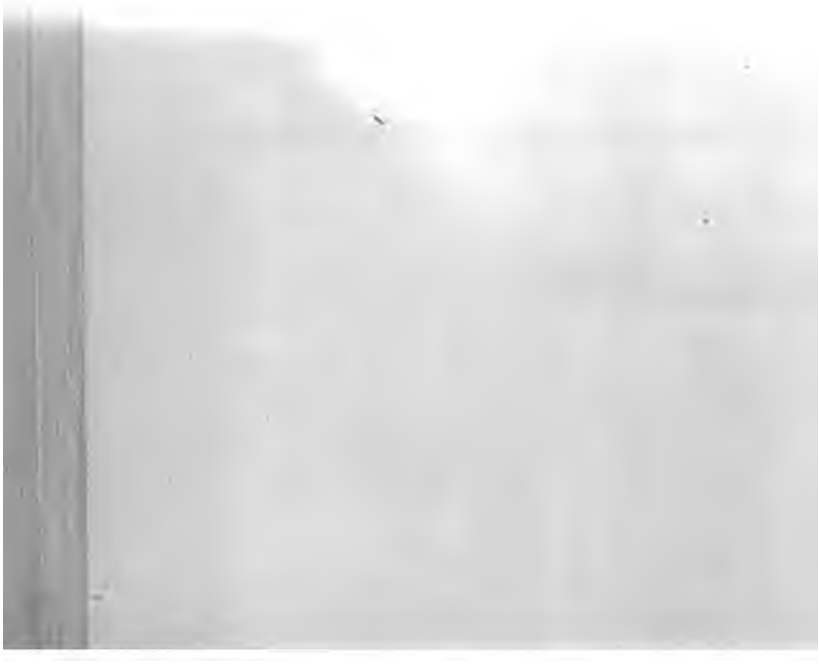
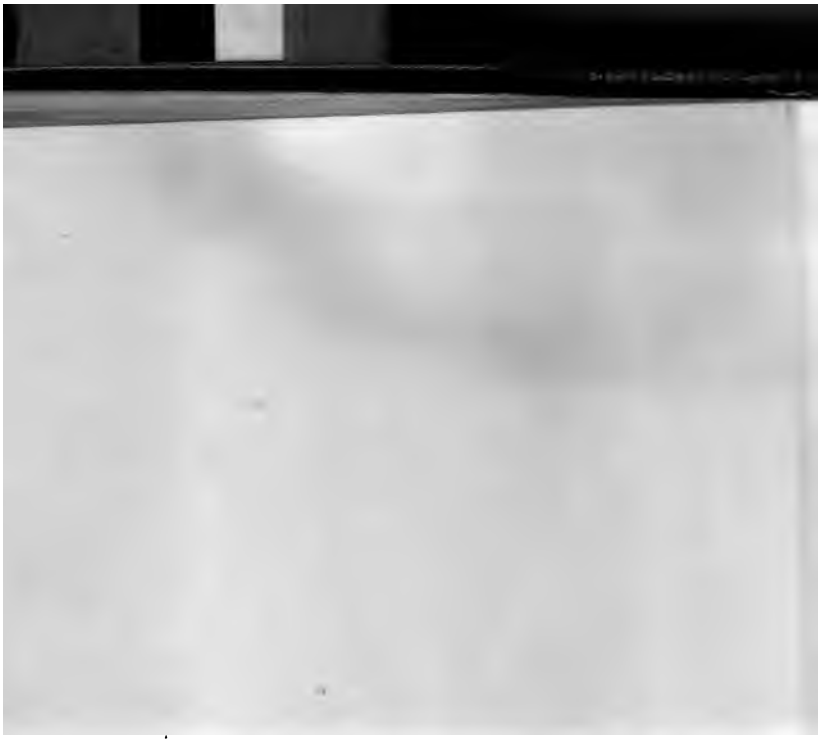
NOTE 1. A woman from the North would probably be a faery woman or at any rate a "knowledgeable" woman, one who was "in the faeries" and certainly not necessarily at all a woman from Ulster. The North where the old Celtic other world was thought to lie is the quarter of spells and faeries. A visionary student, who was at the Dublin Art School when I was there, described to me a waking dream of the North Pole. There were luxuriant vegetation and overflowing life though still but ice to the physical eye. He added thereto his conviction that wherever physical life was abundant, the spiritual life was vague and thin, and of the converse truth.

NOTE 2. St. Patrick prayed, in *The Breastplate of St. Patrick*, to be delivered from the spells of smiths and women.





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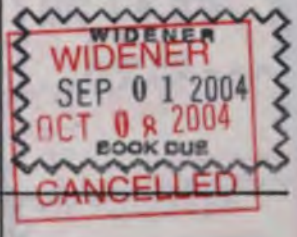

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